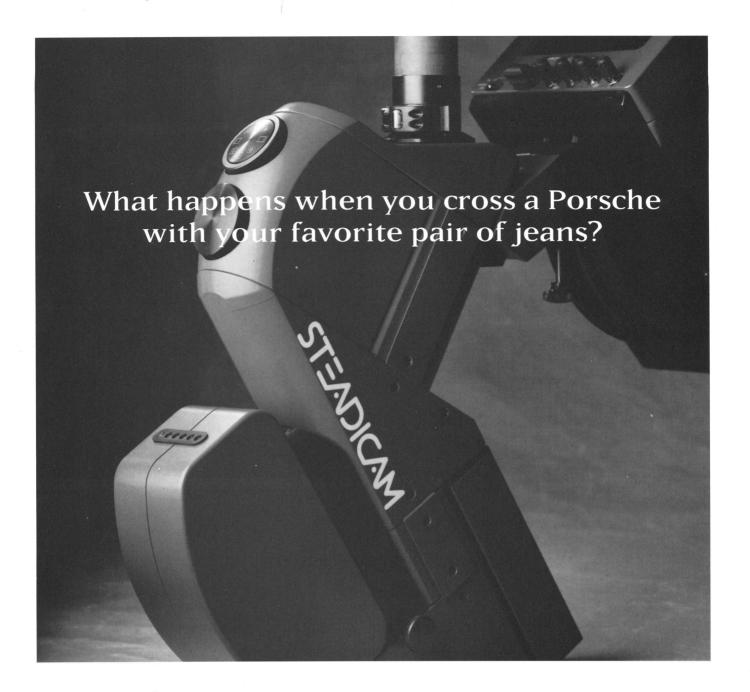
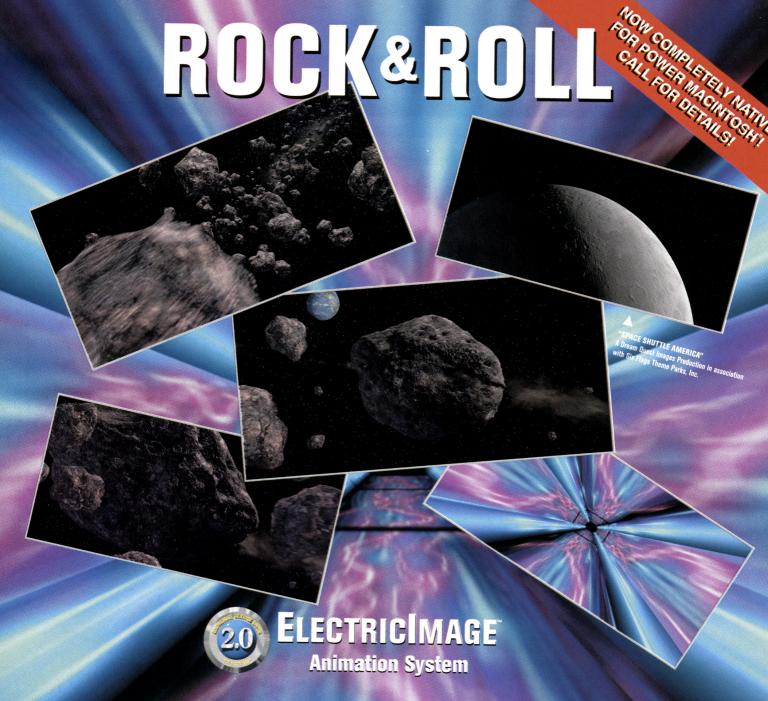
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Directed by Mike Shea, Space Shuttle America marks the FIRST TIME that a PERSON-AL COMPUTER-BASED RENDERING AND ANIMATION PACKAGE was used to create A MOTION PICTURE RESOLUTION THEME PARK RIDE. Digital Effects Supervisor Tim Landry and his team at Dream Quest worked with a beta version of ELECTRICIMAGE ANIMATION SYSTEM 2.0 to create the asteroid field, hyperdrive effect, space debris and moon approach, as well as all of the star fields in the ride. MOTION CONTROL

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MODEL PHOTOGRAPHY of moonbase and structural elements was SEAMLESSLY INTE-GRATED with animations created by ELECTRICIMAGE.

ElectricImage's incredible new MOTION BLUR FEATURE, as well as the renowned SPEED of the package, were the deciding factors for Dream Quest. Rendering at a resolution of 2048 by 1024, each frame contained HUNDREDS OF ASTEROIDS, each with TEXTURE MAPS and separate motion paths. According to Dream Quest's Technical Director, Rob Burton, "The ElectricImage motion blur MATCHED our model photography motion blur PERFECTIX." Indeed. And the render times averaged 25 MINUTES PER FRAME on a Macintosh Quadra 840AV!

So the next time that you are in the CHICAGO area, check out SIX FLAGS GREAT AMERICA and the SPACE SHUTTLE AMERICA FIDE.

Then call us and let us know what you think.



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The undead vampire Louis Pointe du Lac (Brad Pitt), scythe in hand, turns Grim Reaper while annihilating a cabal of Parisian vampires in Interview With the Vampire, photographed by Philippe Rousselot, AFC (photo by Francois Duhamel).

# Contributing Authors:

Brooke Comer Ron Magid Michael H. Price Shaune Sylvester

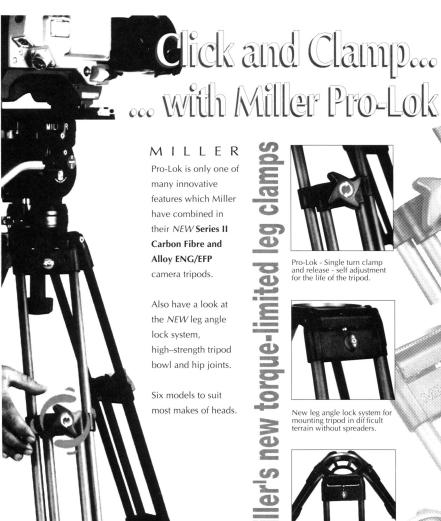


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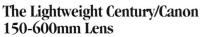
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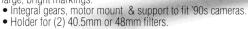


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The American Society of Cinematographers is not a labor union or a guild, but is an educational, cultural and professional organization. Membership is by invitation to those who are actively engaged as directors of photography and have demonstrated outstanding ability. ASC membership has become one of the highest honors that can be bestowed upon a professional cinematographer — a mark of prestige and excellence.

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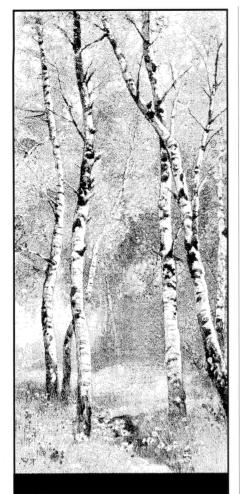
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# Letters



"...heading into Wisconsin through a noble land of good fields and magnificent trees... Why then was I unprepared for the beauty of this region, for its variety of field and hill, forest and lake?... it was a magic day."

John Steinbeck

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# The Good Old Days

While reading over your August 75th anniversary issue, I recalled with great fondness what a great magazine AC used to be. The old reprint articles, especially the interview with Gordon Willis (1971) and the technical article by Arthur Miller, ASC (1966) are classic illustrations of the type of articles that made AC at one time such a great magazine. But that was then . . .

Now. I am bored to tears with endless articles about the computer revolution and CGI. Imax and special venue filmmaking, and digital this and that. What a waste: the majority of working directors of photography out here in the real world — the ones who make up your core of subscribers rarely work with CGI or have ever seen an Imax camera up close. We are the ones who battle day in and day out trving to live up to, and, hopefully, expand the maximum potential of the celluloid medium. We put food on our tables only if we can solve such daily technical issues as what film stock would be best in a particular situation, how to achieve the exact look the client wants, and how to keep abreast of all the new film stock emulsions that are flooding the market.

These are the types of issues that we, the working directors of photography and film students of the world, deal with every day. AC is the only magazine that has the potential of dealing with them and being a medium where we can all share knowledge that can help each other and thereby help elevate the quality and aesthetic standards of the business that feeds us all. There are plenty of other magazines out there that deal with CGI, digital manipulation of the medium, non-linear postproduction and so forth. AC is the only source we have to discuss the nuts and bolts and battle tales from working directors of photography.

I remember back to my days in film school in the early and mid-Eighties

and AC s outstanding articles chronicling such relevant topics as Don Peterman, ASC's exquisite lighting of *Flashdance* (right down to which grade of coral filter he used); John Alonzo, ASC's struggles to shoot the night exteriors for *Blue Thunder*; and how Gordon Willis handcut grad ND filters to achieve the precise and eloquent look of *Manhattan*. These were the issues and articles that convinced me to switch my major to cinematography.

Where have these insightful and technical articles gone? I don't want ephemeral theory, I want the facts. It is important to know why a director of photography picked a particular film stock, or why he or she used a #½ black Pro Mist instead of a #1, or even the circumstances that led Adam Greenberg, ASC to float weather balloons to bounce light inside a practical location. There is no other source where directors of photography and students alike can learn from our peers the tricks of the trade.

A few years back, AC published its highly-touted three-part film stock tests and comparisons, which became a prime example of the kind of article that should have been chock full of useful information but instead fell well short of the mark. The articles were too objective and lacked any appropriate illustrations (you show a test shot of 5245, while all the time discussing Agfa film stocks) to be of any real use to us. Why not publish the opinions of the cinematographers who conducted the tests how did the Fuji look and feel compared to the other stocks? Cinematography is a very subjective and opinionated occupation; if the opinions of these directors of photography didn't matter, they wouldn't be so famous and therefore would not have been asked to conduct the tests in the first place. AC needs to get out of bed with Kodak and report some useful information on all of the film stocks being used out there.

AC has been trying for so long

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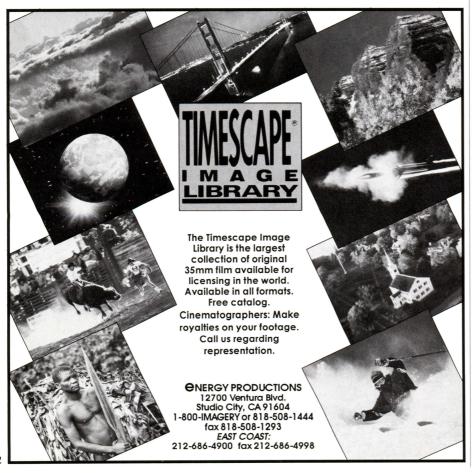
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to broaden its appeal. Why? Cinematography is a private form of alchemy being practiced by a privileged few. They are the ones reading this magazine, so why not address the issues that are important to them? The cost of missing the mark with your core audience of cinematographers is too high. Forget all of the other stuff and get back to the hard-core technical articles about lighting and shooting film so we can all benefit from each other's knowledge and experience. And for those who find that kind of information too technical, boring and esoteric... let them read *Millimeter*.

Kevin Bryan Bassett
 Director of photography

As a long-time reader of your magazine, I read your August '94 edition with great interest, in particular "On Location with *The Godfather.*" It reminded me of the older *AC* magazines, which usually included a lot of direct interviews with cinematographers, and not just descriptions.

Reading the interview between the excellent editor Herb Lightman with Gordon Willis, ASC was so valuable, it was like sitting in an auditorium and being in the front row—truly exciting stuff if one really wants to know about the problems Gordon Willis had to deal with. In January '94 your magazine had a discussion between Robbie Greenberg, ASC and Stephen Goldblatt, ASC which went into that direction, in my mind the right approach and very valuable.

Keep up your good work!
A happy reader who would like to see your magazine even further finetuned.

— Tobias Dodt Freiburg, Germany





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# The Rise of Stock Footage Companies

# compiled by Marji Rhea

# **Energy Productions**

Energy Productions is offering a new service that provides remote searching and viewing of its contemporary film library over phone lines. Working closely with Pacific Bell and Lockheed, Energy is participating as the premiere provider of motion imagery in Pacific Bell's recently announced sixmonth Media Park test.

In the test, Energy Productions is linked with 30 other companies, primarily in the Los Angeles and San Francisco areas, including leading movie studios, advertising agencies and Silicon Valley multimedia developers. Using personal computers in remote locations, these companies will be able to view a wide variety of full-motion video clips in Energy's digital library.

Energy is launching the service with more than 2,000 clips and will expand the collection to include over 25,000 clips by March. The company expects to have over 100,000 clips available for browsing by the end of next year, when the service should be widely available. In addition to developing its own digital library, Energy has launched a new service to digitize, catalog and archive imagery from other companies.

The new Media Park service is a broad-band communications network launched by Pacific Bell that joins companies involved in advertising, film or video production and multimedia into a virtual production studio, allowing them to interchange video and audio data instantly. Along with Energy Productions, participants include BBDO, Apple Computer, Goody, Silverstein & Partners, and Kodak.

Energy Productions' Timescape Image Library includes the world's largest collection of original 35mm film, much of it shot exclusively for the library by the company's own production teams. It features an extensive array of time-

lapse imagery, scenic locations, aerials, Americana, U.S. and world cities, sports, wildlife and natural phenomena. It also represents the work of more than 150 world-renowned cinematographers.

Energy Productions has recently supplied stock footage for the features Natural Born Killers and Mary Shelley's Frankenstein; the television series New York Undercover and Walker, Texas Ranger, the Circle of Life theme park ride at Epcot Center; and commercials for American Express, Princess Cruises, and the U.S. Air Force.

For information: Energy Productions, 12700 Ventura Blvd., 4th Floor, Culver City, CA 91604, (818) 508-1444.

#### Film Bank

Film Bank Stock Film and Video Library has signed an exclusive contract to represent stock footage for CNN News and will be acquiring CNN footage on an ongoing basis. Film Bank already has materials from major news events such as the World Trade Center bombing, the war in Bosnia, and the fall of the Soviet Union.

Atlas Film and Video, a distribution company in Germany, will be representing the entire Film Bank library in Europe starting mid-summer, and offices in France and Germany will enable all of Europe to see Film Bank images within 24 hours. ASFX of Sidney and Melbourne Australia will be marketing Film Bank footage in the South Pacific and negotiations are underway with a South American stock service for representation.

Film Bank has also acquired images from the PBS series *Coming and Going: Transportation, Travel and the American Dream.* Shot in over two dozen states, the series is full of images and information about how we work, commute, transport goods we buy and use, and how our lifestyles are linked to our mobility. "What makes the series so

great for stock footage purposes is that the outs are chock full of all modes of transport from every angle," says Film Bank owner Paula Lumbard. "This means interior and exterior shots of big rig trucking, shipping, trains, planes and passenger cars, moving POVs, loading docks, ship yards, terminals, freeways, stop lights, fuel suppliers, variant weather conditions, roadside attractions and breakdowns."

For information: Film Bank, 425 S. Victory Blvd., Burbank, CA 91502, (818) 841-9176, FAX (818) 567-4235.

#### Cinesite

Cinesite Digital Film Center will sponsor a new area for stock footage libraries on the exhibit floor at the 1995 East and West Coast Showbiz Expo shows. The area will premier at ShowBiz Expo East, January 5-7, 1995 at the New York Hilton & Towers.

For information: ShowBiz Expo, (800) 854-3112; Cinesite Digital Film Center (213) 468-4400.

#### **Prairie Pictures**

Dallas-Fort Worth-based Prairie Pictures StormStock stock footage library was created in 1993 when producer/director Martin Lisius realized that he had established a significant collection of commercial-quality images during several years of pursuing his storm-chasing hobby. Dozens of cuts of spectacular tornadoes, lightning and thunderstorms have been acquired by Lisius as a result of his passionate interest in both photography and severe weather meteorology. Lisius' own storm footage is supplemented with images obtained by a team of StormStock chaser/photographers.

Prairie Pictures is currently developing a special motion picture film package designed specifically for acquiring time-lapse footage of storms.

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The primary goal of the effort is to obtain commercial-grade time-lapse of supercell thunderstorm development. Supercells are large, often violent thunderstorms that are prolific producers of tornadoes. Unlike common thunderstorms, supercells actually rotate and create some of the most spectacular cloud shapes and movements in the weather world.

StormStock's images can be seen in the new Nissan Pathfinder spot "Mother Nature" and in a commercial for Act II Golden Valley French Fries.

For information: Prairie Pictures, P.O. Box 122020, Arlington, TX 76012, (817) 640-9603.

## **Scott Dittrich Films**

Scott Dittrich Films has moved into a new facility in Malibu and expanded its footage base. A film production house as well as a library, the company recently made arrangements to gain access to much of the footage they have shot for clients and have transferred this to D-2 for their library. They have also purchased a second 35mm camera for additional production work, with the idea that most of the footage will end up in the library. The company recently shot a jeans commercial for a South American company that wanted an L.A. feel but not an L.A. budget; knowing they'd be able to use the considerable Los Angeles background footage in their library, Dittrich Films was able to make the shoot much more affordable for the company. Several of the shots are now airing in a Dodge spot.

For information: Scott Dittrich Films, P.O. Box 301, Malibu, CA 90265, (310) 459-2526, FAX (310) 456-1743.

# The Image Bank

Euro Aim (European Association for Independent Audiovisual Market) has signed with a new division of the Image Bank — Archive Research and Management Services (ARAMS). The Image Bank will work with Euro Aim in its efforts to market and support European film and television production.

Loaded on Image Index — the Image Bank's interactive computer system that searches and retrieves footage for review in seconds — are 300 titles of Euro Aim's current productions.

Euro Aim's Production Mediabase of more than 7,000 European independent productions (with detailed information on each entry) and Producers' Mediabase (offering profiles of more than 1100 European independent production companies) connect the European independent production and distribution companies with necessary partners for financing, marketing and distribution. ARAMS is selectively contracting with previously unseen collections and institutions worldwide. The Image Bank will represent, index and distribute rare footage to a greater audience for expanded commercial use.

Founded in 1974, the Image Bank began as a stock photography agency and established the Image Bank Film Division in 1989. Today, with corporate headquarters in Dallas and 48 fully-equipped film offices in 30 countries, the Image Bank is an independently operated subsidiary of the Eastman Kodak Company.

The work of more than 200 filmmakers and film collectors is exclusively represented in the Image Bank's continually updated and evolving Film Library. The interactive laserdisc/computer system Image Index searches and retrieves footage for review from the Image Bank's entire film collection. This visual database can find a film clip in half a second and is available for use at all film offices worldwide.

The Image Bank recently acquired Petrified Films, whose holdings consist of more than 300,000 separate rolls of stock material from the 1920s to the 1960s. Petrified's holdings include pre-1951 Warner Bros. footage, pre-1965 Columbia classic films, the Elmer Dver Stock Footage Library, the Jam Handy Organization and Calvin Studios collection, as well as educationals and industrials. The Warner Bros. footage includes about 20,000 cans of film encompassing stock shots, montage devices, special effects, and rear-projection backgrounds. Sources include features and documentary shorts, as well as 3,000 cans of military and government films of battle action, military training and military subjects acquired by Warner.

Columbia's footage comprises 8,200 cans of stock classic films such as *Gilda, Lost Horizon,* and *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*. The Elmer Dyer collection was begun in 1920 by cinematographer Elmer Dyer. It was amassed during his 50-year worldwide career and spans

all countries and topics. The Jam Handy Organization and Calvin Studios were two of the largest producers of industrial motion pictures, whose subjects include industry, insitutions, transportation, communications, daily life, consumerism and Americana. The educationals and industrials include hundreds of completed educational and industrial films from the 1930s to the 1950s, including such titles as *Dating Dos and Don'ts* and *What is a Corporation?* 

Broadcast-quality footage, mastered on D-1, is available on a sameday basis around the world in all commercial formats through the Image Bank's licensing network. The company also maintains exclusive reproduction rights to contemporary photographs, illustrations and historical graphic images.

The Image Bank also recently supplied 19 segments and 20 archival sequences for *Natural Born Killers*. The archival clips come from the Petrified Film collection and include howling wolves, color panoramas of Las Vegas in the 1950s, Depression-era amusement park scenes, etc. Petrified also provided 1950s New York skylines for the feature film *Quiz Show* and a buffalo stampede sequence for *Ed Wood*.

For information: The Image Bank, 111 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10003, (212) 529-6700.

#### **Archive Films**

Thousands of hours of historical and entertainment footage produced from 1894 through the 1980s has been transferred to videocassette at Archive Films for reference purposes and is available in all film and videotape formats for use. The collection encompasses newsreels, silent films, classics, comedies, Hollywood features, historical dramas, documentaries, industrial films, educational films, TV programs, sports films, cartoons, home movies, time-lapse photography and rare music footage — including rock 'n' roll, jazz, folk, Big Band, swing, blues and country.

A computerized retrieval and catalog system enables Archive's research department and client personnel or their representatives to expediently locate, view and select material from a wide range of subjects, personalities and locales.

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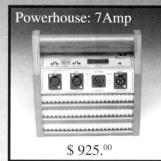
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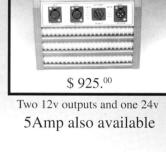
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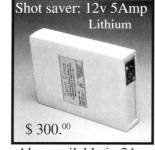
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For information: Archive Films Stock Footage Library, 530 West 25th St., New York, NY 10001, (212) 620-3955, FAX (212) 645-2137.

# **Upcoming Events**

January 5-7: ShowBiz Expo East, New York City. For information: (800) 854-3112.

January 13 DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES (January 20 for students): New England Film & Video Festival, May 11-13, 1995, Boston. Indpendent cat-

egory open to residents of New England only. Student category open to residents or students at New England schools. For information: (413) 545-2360.

January 13-15, 1994: 2nd Annual International Film Financing Conference (IFFCON), San Francisco. For information: (415) 281-9777.

January 20-22: New films from Germany, American Cinematheque at the Directors Guild Theater, Hollywood. For information: (213) 466-FILM.

January 21 DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES: The Cinewomen Screening Series (late February date to be announced) showcasing films by independent women filmmakers. Please submit work on VHS tape along with a \$20 check made payable to Cinewomen, 9903 Santa Monica Blvd., Suite 461, Beverly Hills, CA 90212. Please provide SASE for tape return. For more information: Cinewomen, (310) 855-8720.

January 28: Conference on emerging technologies in the entertainment industry, sponsored by MENTOR (Motivated Entrepreneurs Networking to Organize Resources). For information: (213) 629-0654.

February 3-12: 12th Annual Miami Film Festival, Miami, FL. For information: (305) 377-3456.

February 12-15: The First Pan-Chromatic Conference, sponsored by the Inter-Society Color Council, Williamsburg, VA. For information: (703) 318-0514.

February 15-17: VISCOMM/mxMedia, a mixed media exhibition for creators of visual communications, London. For information: (203) 852-0500, ext. 107, FAX (203) 831-8446.

February 22-26: Recent Spanish Cinema, including tribute to director Bigas Luna, American Cinematheque at the Directors Guild Theater, Hollywood. For information: (213) 466-FILM.

February 25-27: Post/LA Expo (at the American Film Market), trade show for the postproduction industry, Santa Monica, CA. For information: American Film Marketing Association, (310) 447-1555, FAX (310) 447-1666.

March 1 DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES: Movies on a Shoestring at the 37th Annual Rochester International Independent Film Festival. For information: (716) 288-5607. 

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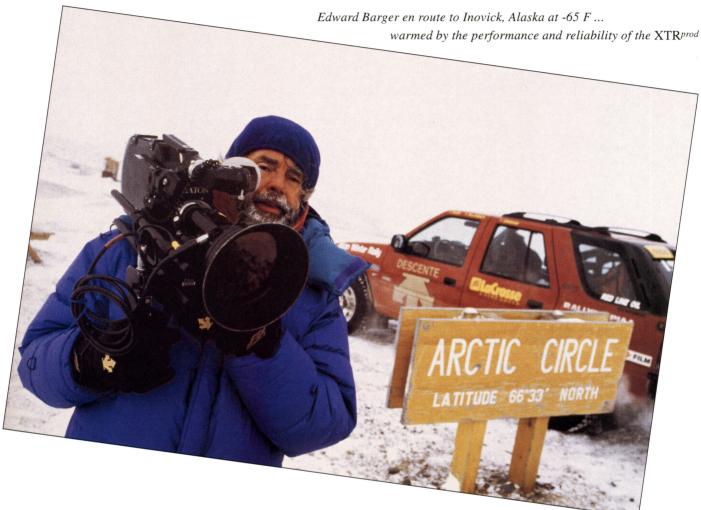
Many times in the course of filming the race, the only way to get running footage was to hold the entire camera out the RODEO'S window at speeds in excess of 65 MPH. The minus 35 temperature and resulting wind chill factor did not effect the AATON.

The AATON XTRPROD has performed flawlessly for me in all sort of conditions. The desert of Saudi Arabia, the Out Back of Australia and the pouring winter rain of Amsterdam, none of this has caused this camera to miss a lick!

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# Persistence of Vision

# **Embracing the Concept of Color Correction**

# by Fritz Roland

It was almost 20 years ago, during a film-to-tape transfer. The colorist was scrolling through a list of previous corrections, and I saw one of my pictures transformed: a bright, almost shadowless scene became dark and moody, with a golden glow I could have achieved only after hours of meticulous lighting. That scene was only on the screen a couple of seconds, but I never forgot it.

A few years later, I was the director of photography on a low-budget drama. We were moving too fast, and a confused young assistant loaded the wrong stock. You can guess the rest: the roll was overexposed several stops, and with the wrong filter. I arrived late for the film-to-tape session and the colorist had already gone to work. He'd fixed the exposure and filter mistakes, but he'd taken the scene in a totally different direction than I'd intended. He'd actually re-lit the set, changed the mood, and given it a different look.

What really burned me was that I liked his version better than my original idea. I wasn't happy about it. So what if he had stumbled on to something better — who was this mousy little guy to be screwing around with my lighting? More than that, I was disturbed at how much power he had in that color correction box. From then on, I went into film transfer sessions with a distinct queasiness, a feeling that my creative control was being threatened.

Every time I entered the domain of a colorist, it was like stepping into the land of Oz. Wide-eyed, I pumped the colorists for their secrets. And I started asking myself, is the colorist holding back? Playing politics? Could the picture be made even better? More to the point, could it be made to look totally different? I suspected the answer was yes, which made me wonder: Would I ever have the guts to invite the colorist to go full-bore and experiment with my

work? Was I willing to share control?

As time went by, I persuaded the colorists to show me what they could do. It was more than I'd imagined. They could create day-for-night with the turn of a few knobs. They could alter the gamma electronically, softening contrast or deepening shadows, and they could program their corrections to change during a scene, so smoothly that no one would ever guess it was being manipulated.

# I turn knobs in a darkened room these days, but my cameraman's instincts are still functioning.

Most of the colorists I met were flattered by my attentions. A few of them were willing to talk about their craft. I discovered they had an unwritten rule: "Never tread into uncharted waters unless the client demands it." In other words, stick to color correction — it's a safe place to be. You'll avoid controversy.

To someone like me, a cameraman who spent years learning how to manipulate light, the "color correction" idea is insulting. It may be a safe place for the colorist to hide, but it implies that there's some established standard. The only standard that matters is the "look" I'm trying to get. Good colorists know this, too. Everything is subjective. What counts is giving it a look that supports the overall concept. And that's why there's such a powerful mystique associated with the colorist's art.

One day, an especially talented colorist admitted that his craft was rarely being used to it fullest. Yes, he was hemmed in by the unspoken laws of creative control, but there was more. He was working with uncut footage, most of

it destined to be outtakes. He couldn't spend hours fine-tuning shots that would never be used. Furthermore, he'd never be able to match cuts — that could only be done "in context," after editing, long after the film-to-tape transfer. I was crushed. Here was a terrific creative tool whose power had been bottled up — made inaccessible. However, I did suspect that this barrier might someday disappear. Clearly, the power to manipulate images was entirely on the electronic side

of the film-to-tape fence. That being true, tape-to-tape correction shouldn't be that difficult. I knew nothing of the engineering required to achieve

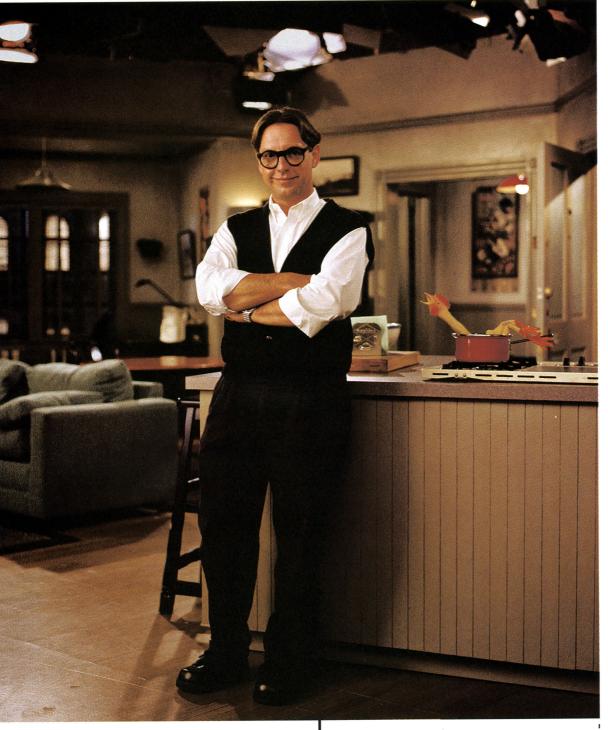
my fantasy, but I knew I was on to something that would transform the whole postproduction ballgame.

Fast forward a few years. How did an aging film shooter end up in the high-tech heights of a modern video facility? You could say I just wanted my own color correction suite, which is partly true. In hindsight, it was something akin to destiny.

For example, there was the day I happened to see a demonstration of component video. That was a dozen years ago, when component video recording was the newest engineering miracle. I was struck by the spectacular image quality, and by the fact that this quality was achieved by recording the three color signals separately.

To my non-engineer's mind, component recording promised an answer to the problem of color correction after the online edit. If the color signals could be recorded separately, they could be manipulated separately (engineers say "discretely"), exactly as in film-to-tape sessions. All the power of that process could be applied "in context." Not

# there's nothing funny about a flat sitcom.



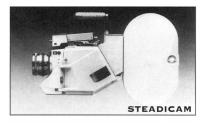
Wayne Kennan

Director of Photography, SEINFELD.

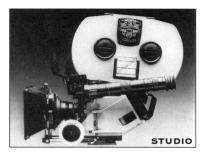
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SEATTLE PORTLAND 206-467-8666 503-233-0249 only that, but the same magic could at last be applied to projects originated on tape as well as film.

Once I'd seen the quality and potential of component video, there was no stopping me. I'll skip lightly over all the blind alleys and false starts — the months of experimenting with early Betacam equipment in my basement, the exchange of correspondence with engineers at Sony and Grass Valley. When it was over, I was a retired director of photography running a video post facility. Above all, I had a new career and job title: colorist.

I've made peace with the term "color correction." You can't fight it. But it's no longer a fancy euphemism for white balance. Technology played a bigger role than I'd ever expected. Component recording turned out to be only part of the equation. Tape-to-tape correction after the online editing requires an additional tape generation. Fortunately, digital recording arrived on the scene just in time, and voila! No generation losses!

Before we leave the technical stuff, one small but critical point: every step in the process must be component digital, including the final master. When you master on a composite format, including D-2, you're trading the tape generation problem for the losses caused by encoding and decoding.

So there I was, two years after starting my new company, at last ready to offer an incredibly sophisticated method of image manipulation with absolutely no signal degradation. Color correction after editing was a reality. We called it "tape-to-tape" correction, announced our breakthrough, and braced ourselves for a rush of clients seeking to use the awesome power we'd developed.

It was a dismal flop. I'd never met so many nay-sayers. People didn't think their material needed "fixing." Our powerful equipment sat idle most of the time. Sometimes we used it to save a cameraman who forgot to white balance, or to clean up faded and discolored archival footage.

It was disheartening, but I pressed on. A few clients who did take advantage of our capabilities told me my color corrections made their video look more like film. I decided to push this idea to the limit. Could video be made to look like film, especially if the colorist under-

stands how it would have looked if it had been shot on film in the first place?

Yes, it could! At last we'd found an idea producers and shooters could understand and appreciate. We took a new approach to tape-to-tape correction, and even gave it a name: Filmreal. It's based on an understanding of the differences between film and video images, gamma curves and the way video renders color. Some clients even ask us to add grain to the image, a film characteristic I've always tried to eliminate. Grain was one of my arguments for shooting 35mm instead of 16mm. Ah well, times have changed!

For our clients who shoot film, we offer a process called Second Chance. It's like giving the cameraman another opportunity to refine the imagery. Whether a production originates on film or tape, we're offering the same sophisticated capability to manipulate images in ways that may not have been possible at the time of the shooting. And with this, we have entered forbidden territory.

That artistry, and a desire to preserve it, is what led to the evolution of sophisticated color correction in the first place. Video production is inherently more populist and unencumbered by the emotions of creative control. With a trigger finger and some very inexpensive tape stock, almost anyone can deliver moving images. What comes out may be junk or it may be art, but the video production "culture" is not rooted in the Hollywood tradition. Until recently, a lot of video was shot without much effort to impose an aesthetic. In time, these controversies will be sorted out, and I can't say what the picture-making business will look like when the dust settles. For now, I can predict that the time is coming when every video post facility will offer the sophisticated services I'm describing, whether it's called color correction or something else, and it will be as routine as online editing.

In fact, film shooters, exactly like their video brethren, often have no choice but to shoot whatever moves: newsreels, rock concerts, low-budget commercials or drama, political propaganda. In a lot of situations, film or tape, there's not much anyone can do but compose an interesting shot and press the button. Film and video projects can be equally disadvantaged by adverse condi-

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tions. Both need the sensitive hand of a good colorist. And if that colorist happens to have some fresh ideas, and is willing to be daring, what happens is not much different from what a good director of photography does. I turn knobs in a darkened room these days, but my cameraman's instincts are still functioning. I admit it — some of what I do amounts to re-lighting, adding gels to the lights, removing filters . . . fairly dramatic changes.

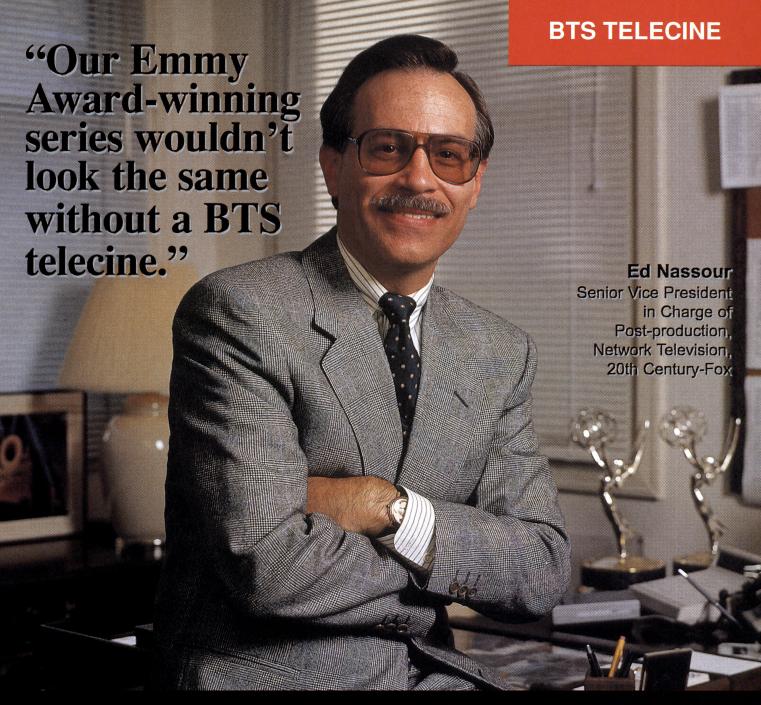
Does my boldness ever get me in hot water? Not really. Everything I do can be altered if the client doesn't buy it. My attitude is "let's try something." If I can help that footage look like there were three extra gaffers and a truckload of equipment at the location, why not?

This may sound heretical, but in my world, there is no cameraman. When a typical edited show comes through my door, it includes footage by half a dozen shooters, each "picked up" for a few days, with no overall sense of the project. And it's loaded with stock footage. Trying to impose a "look" on these projects during production is difficult

Most of the time the clients had no idea of the extent to which their material could be transformed. Many people wind up changing their strategy with film transfers. They make only simple corrections and save the big decisions for tape-to-tape. We have many network and cable clients who wouldn't dream of posting any other way.

But the best part of this story is that it's not really about technology. Digital component methods have made it possible, but it's really about making pictures, a creative process, a process involving artistry.

That dark, moody scene that flickered across the screen so many years ago was indeed the birth of a notion, a clue to the enormous potential that's finally within reach. Not everyone has embraced it yet; the politics of creative control may undergo some realignment. The unwritten rules will have to be rewritten. The people who call themselves colorists may have to unlearn some of their most cherished premises. Could it be that a whole generation of aging directors of photography will find second careers as colorists, like I did? Who will have the right to turn the knobs? I can't say. But the power exists.



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The annual International Documentary Association Awards Dinner is always a warm and pleasant affair — one can be assured that these people aren't just in it for the money. One leaves with a sense of hope and the feeling that humanitarian and altruistic urges can occasionally prevail in an industry that for the most part operates on two of humankind's less noble motivations: fear and greed.

IDA was founded in 1982 for the purpose of providing a global forum where nonfiction filmmakers could exchange ideas and cooperate to advance common goals. The original organization had about a dozen members. Today, it has some 1,300 members in 25 countries. The annual IDA Awards Dinner, sponsored by Eastman Kodak Company since its inception in 1985, and DocuFest screenings have become a primary showcase for documentary filmmakers.

At this year's dinner, held October 28 at the Miramar Sheraton Hotel in Santa Monica, Albert Maysles received the 1994 Career Achievement Award, and film archivist John E. Allen was named winner of the IDA's Preservation and Scholarship Award. Five feature-length documentaries and one short were honored as well.

#### **Albert Maysles**

Collaborating primarily with his brother David, and in the early years with Charlotte Zwerin, then Ellen Hovde and Susan Froemke, Maysles has accumulated a wide-ranging body of work spanning 40 years, featuring such classics as Salesman, Gimme Shelter, Running Fence, Grey Gardens, Christo's Valley Curtain, The Beatles: The First U.S. Visit and Abortion: Desperate Choices. He is currently working with longtime collaborator Susan Froemke on Hospice, a film for HBO that explores the last few months of terminally ill people.

Maysles was born in Boston, the city to which his parents

had immigrated from Russia at an early age. His father was a postal clerk and his mother was a school teacher. Maysles graduated from Syracuse University, and then earned an M.A. in psychology from Boston University and became an instructor at that documentary *Primary*, produced by Robert Drew. It documented the 1959 primary campaign, during which future president John F. Kennedy vied with Hubert H. Humphrey in a classic political battle. There was no music and no narrator. The story was told

# Real Life Through the Lens

# IDA Awards recognize documentarians and their subjects.

# by David Heuring

school. During the summer of 1955, Maysles decided to visit Russia to learn about his parents' homeland, which had become his country's Cold War adversary. He had limited savings and needed a way to fund the trip.

"I was a pretty good still photographer, so I visited Life magazine and tried to sell them on the idea of hiring me to take pictures in Russia," he recalls. "They wouldn't give me an advance, but I noticed a CBS sign on another building. I walked in cold and sold them on the idea."

The CBS news department loaned Maysles a 16mm Keystone camera and all of the film he could carry. They agreed to pay him a dollar for every foot aired. CBS only used 14 feet of his film, but Maysles used the rest to produce a 15-minute documentary for WGBH, the PBS station in Boston.

Based on that experience, Maysles believed he had found his life's work. The next summer he and his brother David made a motorcycle journey from Munich to Moscow. During their travels, they documented the student revolution in Poland on film. The footage aired on NBC.

Maysles' first involvement with sync-sound was in the

with natural sound and the images Maysles and his colleagues captured on film. *Primary* won a special award from the National Society of Film Critics.

Maysles says that his cinema verité, or direct cinema, approach to documentary filmmaking is based on "a conviction that it's a noble thing to record reality without controlling it. It also reflects my personality."

Maysles and his brother David collaborated on 24 films. They worked closely as a team, he with the camera, and David with a portable sync sound recorder. In 1968, the Maysles brothers' Salesman was partially funded by a Guggenheim grant, a significant recognition of the documentary form as an art. In 1993 the Library of Congress added the film to the National Film Registry, a list of American films recognized as being culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant.

#### John Allen

Film archivist John E. Allen was honored for his efforts to preserve the films of his company's library, a collection of more than 30 million feet of film dating back to 1896. He was singled out for his work in restor-

ing shrunken, damaged and deteriorating films, including unstable inflammable nitrate-based films, which predate today's safety film stock.

Allen's company, John E. Allen, Inc., in Bergen County, N.J., was founded by his father, John E. Allen, in the 1930s. The stock footage library includes a large collection of newsreels, including very early Kinograms and the later Telenews. The library is one of the most extensive private collections of early films in the United States.

"John Allen's work to preserve the Kinogram and Telenews newsreels, as well as other priceless motion picture films, have benefited documentary filmmakers and historians worldwide," says Mel Stuart, IDA president.

Allen says he is simply following in his father's footsteps. The elder Allen died in 1976. "We're continuing the tradition of my father, who would not allow people to throw films out," Allen explains. "There's a lot of unwanted film out there. We provide a home for it. We end up with a lot of film — tens of thousands of cans that people just don't want. If we don't take it, it would end up in the Dumpster. A lot of history is being thrown in the garbage."

An outgrowth of the stock footage library has been the establishment of a lab in Pennsylvania that handles everything except processing of original camera negative.

"The lab operation stems from our attempt to get the most detail and quality out of an original element, whether it be a new element or one from 1900," Allen explains.

# Distinguished Achievements

Twenty-one featurelength documentaries and five documentary "shorts" were nominated for the IDA's Distinguished Documentary Achievement awards. The five winning films were screened the following day at the IDA's DocuFest at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

This year's distinguished achievements, chosen from a field of more than 300 documentaries:

Black Harvest by Bob Connolly and Robin Anderson. This 90-minute 16mm documentary revolves around "two ambitious men vying for power, of two cultures, racing toward a head-on collision and a dream that turns sour," according to the filmmakers. The film, set in New Guinea, focuses on the struggles between a mixed-race highlander who is a wealthy coffee plantation owner and a tribal leader who is his ally.

Freedom on my Mind by Connie Field and Marilyn Mulford. A winner of the 1994 Grand Jury Prize for best documentary at the Sundance Film Festival, this 16mm film tells the story of the Mississippi Voter

# "It's a noble thing to record reality without controlling it."

# — Albert Maysles

Registration Project (1961-1964). The story is told through the recollections of men and women involved in that civil rights project; archival footage is used to introduce the players in their youth.

Hoop Dreams by Frederick Marx, Steve James and Peter Gilbert. This three-hour documentary, winner of the Audience Award at the Sundance Film Festival, deals with the lives of playground basketball players in the projects in Chicago. The 35mm film was seven years in the making.

I am a Promise: The Children of Stanton Elementary School by Alan Raymond and Susan Raymond. Filmed over the

course of an entire school year at Stanton Elementary School, this 16mm documentary tells the story "of a community in which children grow up outside the American dream and where hope survives in their education." Ninety percent of the school's 725 African-American students live below the poverty line and come from single-parent homes. "The film is an unflinching portrait of very young children growing up in another America," the filmmakers say. This film also received the 1993 Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature.

Moving the Mountain by Trudie Styler and Michael Apted. This feature documentary tells the story of Chinese students involved in the 1989 pro-democracy movement that culminated in the Tiananmen Square massacre. The film includes interviews with leading dissidents and looks at the lives of the student leaders today as well as the future of political change in China.

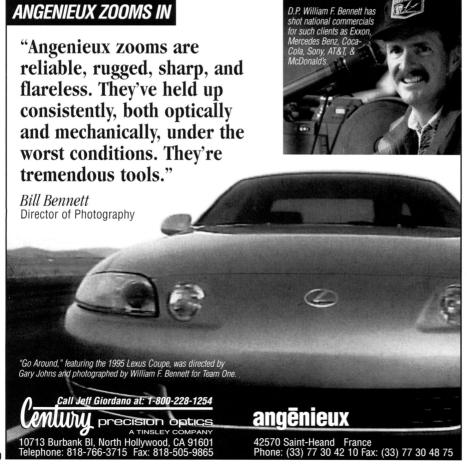
The winner in the short category, designed to honor films of 35 minutes or less, was bui doi, life like dust by Ahrin Mishan and Nick Rothenberg. This 16mm black & white documentary examines a critical moment in the life of Ricky Phan, a Vietnamese refugee and gang member now serving an 11-year sentence for armed robbery. "Through a complex interweaving of cinema verité footage, shot over a threeyear period prior to Ricky's arrest, life like dust creates a subtle portrait of Ricky's mind as he sits in prison trying to make sense of his difficult life," the filmmakers explain. "The film travels between Ricky's distant memories of home and his recent experience."

# Student Award to Uncommon Ground

Amie S. Williams, a graduate of the UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television, has been named winner of the International Documentary Association's David L. Wolper







Student Documentary Achievement Award.

Williams' 16mm film, *Uncommon Ground*, was selected from some 100 documentaries submitted by students worldwide. Seven other documentaries were named Certificate of Merit winners.

Williams received \$1,000 worth of Eastman film stock from Kodak. Her winning film brings together a diverse group of American and South African youth to explore the issue of race, culture and identity. It was shot in Los Angeles and South Africa, and includes Hi8 video footage taken by the young people. Williams developed the idea for the film while working in the antiapartheid movement in Los Angeles.

"This documentary attempts to bring young people together to discuss their similarities and differences on an entirely new plane," Williams says. "It's a way to show them anyone can pick up a camera and make their views known."

The film received grants from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the American Film Institute for Independent Film and Video, the California Council for the Humanities, Eastman Kodak Company, and the Los Angeles Arts Recovery Fund.

In addition to the IDA award, *Uncommon Ground* received the Emerging Vision Award at the Atlanta International Film Festival. Williams' first narrative film, *What The Water Gave Her*, a dramatic short about domestic violence, was named best narrative film at the Ann Arbor Film Festival in 1992.

Williams' background includes three years working as an English teacher, writer and educational media consultant in Kenya. She has also worked as both a research and teaching assistant at UCLA in film production, African studies and women's studies.

# "At Clairmont, I get equipment—not excuses," says Director of Photography Gary Manske

"When I order gear, they always have what I'll need. And when we prep it, everything's there, as promised."

For my work, there's no crucial difference between one camera and another," says Gary Manske. "They all pull film. What I need is high-quality lenses, sophisticated filtration; and choice."

# Both variety and quantity

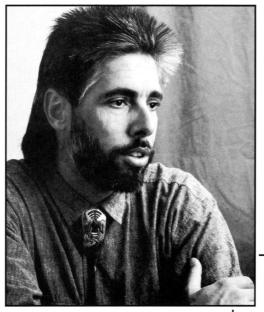
"Two kinds of choice: wide and deep. I know Clairmont has fifteen different types of fluid and geared head. I also know they have *enough* of them, so I'll get the one I want."

# "Sorry-all out"

"There are big-name rental houses that take your order this week. Next week, when you're ready to shoot, they tell you they're out of certain things you ordered. That's happened to me all over the country. Never at Clairmont."

# Try this one

"Just the opposite, in fact. If one item doesn't feel right, the Clairmont people bring you out another one. At some other places, they tend to look at you sideways. Because they don't have another one? Because they think the first one's good enough? Hard to tell."



Gary Manske has been a DP since 1983, shooting TV commercials for Bell, Budweiser, Honda motorcycles, Mattel, McDonalds, Proctor & Gamble (an ADDY) and Xerox (a CLIO).

# Another new set: Black and White

"Clairmont has so many filters, it's hard to keep up. They're always showing me something new they just got—another set of sunset grads for different focal lengths. Even a complete range for black and white."

# Confidence

"And if you haven't used something of theirs before, they immediately get it out and set it up so you can take a look," says Mr. Manske. "Their attitude gives me confidence in their equipment. When a producer tells me the rental deal is somewhere else, I miss that."

#### "They made me a riser plate for my Hasselblad."

"I often use my Hasselblad for location-scouting stills," says Gary Manske, "And I wanted to take shots with the filters I'd be using. So Clairmont made a riser plate to center the Hasselblad on their 6.6 mattebox."

# CLAIRMONT CAMERA

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# Titanica Takes Imax Into New Waters

Expedition gathers spectacular footage of "world's greatest shipwreck."

# by Shaune Sylvester

It's the middle of summer and broad daylight, but 375 miles off the coast of Newfoundland three men are surrounded by darkness. They sit so close their legs touch, in a sphere so small they can't stand up straight. At two-and-a-half miles below the ocean's surface, the pressure is 6,000 pounds per square inch, but they are trusting their safety to one of the most advanced submersibles in the world.

Right now, though, they are not thinking about the quality of their submarine. They are trapped, lodged in debris on the stern of the world's most famous shipwreck. When the *Titanic* sank in 1912, 1,522 people died. Now, at the same site, these men face the worst fate possible for a submariner. If they are unable to free themselves, they can only wait for death.

Somewhere in the darkness floats a twin sub; they can communicate with it, but they cannot see it and it cannot help them. The men struggle to remain calm as the pilot tries again and again to ease the sub out of the debris that is holding it.

Finally the agonizing scraping and grinding stops. They are free, carrying away with them an unwanted souvenir of *Titanic* debris on the roof of the sub.

The tension in the audience releases as people glance reassuringly at their neighbors. This is a scene from *Titanica* on an 80-foot Imax screen. *Titanica* is among the first feature-length documentary films made in

Imax, and, beginning with the expedition to the wreck in July of 1991, it has generated a great deal of excitement. Now that the film has opened, that excitement is culminating in rave reviews and packed audiences. In Toronto, 9,000 tickets were sold on opening day and more than 38,000 in the first ten days.

The Imax camera became famous when it first rode the shuttle into space to bring back breathtaking images of our planet. When Imax Corporation announced that the camera

Robert Ballard on an earlier expedition captured the world's attention, they left a great deal of room for improvement.

For the Imax expedition, Canadians and Americans joined Russians on board the *Akademik Keldysh*, the Russian research vessel that houses the twin MIR submersibles that made the film possible. It was also the first expedition made primarily for filming and scientific study.

"We wanted this to be a different mission," says producer/director Stephen Low. "The first was a discovery, exploration and mapping mission, done very skillfully by Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute out of Massachusetts, and the second was by the French for recovering artifacts. We wanted to get into some unanswered questions about the *Titanic* and what's happening to it down there.

"The relationship between film and science was symbiotic. Many Russian and Canadian scientists wanted an oppor-



otos courtesy IM.

would be making the trip to the *Titanic*, a surprising amount of publicity resulted. Even though there had been two previous expeditions to the *Titanic*, the shipwreck maintained its aura of mystery and its hold on the imagination of many people — people from around the globe, as we see in the film. Although the video images brought back by

tunity to study a shipwreck at that depth, but had been unable to secure the funding. When the film idea came up and funding became available, there was terrific interest in piggybacking the two concerns. The film is essentially a science and adventure film."

The development of Titanica began with National

Geographic photographer Emory Kristof, cameraman Ralph White and co-executive producer Dr. Joe MacInnis. All deep-ocean veterans, they had been working with the Manned Submersibles department of the Soviet Academy of Sciences in the hope of putting together a filming expedition to the *Titanic*. MacInnis approached Andre Picard, then vice-president of film at Imax Corporation, about the possibility of taking advantage of this

connection and putting funding together to do the project. Excited by the idea, Picard approached Low, knowing he had shown an earlier interest in filming the *Titanic*.

Although filming the shipwreck in Imax presented a host of unique problems, Low was keen to proceed with the project, which he believed to ideally suited to the format. "One of the best uses of Imax," he says, "is taking people where they otherwise would not be able to go, like

into outer space, and in this case the inner space of the absolute darkness of the *Titanic*, sitting at the bottom of the sea. Imax gives you the sense of being there, it fills your peripheral vision, and it's really the only film format that can do justice to the *Titanic*, both in scale and resolution."

Low, a ten-year veteran of Imax filmmaking, first became interested in making an Imax film about the *Titanic* when the wreck

was located by Woods Hole in 1985. "We had a great deal of interest from Imax Corporation and also Robert Ballard, but a number of things conspired against us, not the least of which was the collapse of our sponsorship several weeks before we were planning to go. We had done fit checks of the camera in the Alvin submarine and we had some lights built in preparation for the dive. In retrospect it was a blessing in disguise that we



Opposite: Aboard one of the MIR submersibles. director Stephen Low (left) and pilot Evgeny Chernjaev, with the Imax camera between them, prepare for a dive to the Titanic wreck. Travel time from the surface down 12.500 meters to the ocean bottom took 2 1/2 hours. This page, above: A look at the encrusted bow of the Titanic. Right: Shedding light on one of the ship's propellers.

didn't do it at the time."

The six-year delay allowed for the Russian connection, which turned out to be crucial to the film for a number of reasons. Unlike the Americans and the French, the Russians could provide twin submersibles, MIR I and MIR II, two of the select few subs capable of diving to at least 13,000 feet. (The MIRs are rated for 20,000 feet.) Having two subs was an advantage for filming, says Low, because it meant being able to light not only from the camera position, but to sidelight and backlight as well: "The biggest problem with underwater lighting is that if you light from the same angle as the camera, it's just like lighting up a snowstorm with your headlights; it obscures the subject you're trying to shoot. We were able to minimize that problem."

Another advantage of the MIRs was that each sub had double the power of Woods Hole's Alvin. The total battery power available was about 80 kilowatt hours per sub. This translated into more lights and more dive time. On Alvin, crews are limited to eight-hour dives, whereas the Russians will take the MIRs down for up to 20 hours. "Subtract five hours of transit time," says Low, "and in the American case you've only got three hours of bottom time. Considering it takes 20 minutes to reload an Imax magazine, it simply would not have been enough. The Russian subs left us with up to 15 hours of actual pho-

tography time on each dive."

The result was 40,000 feet, or 120 minutes, of Imax footage. Out of a two-sub total of 17 dives, the Imax camera went down eight times, with Low as cameraman on three dives,

Ralph White on three and Paul Mockler on two.

Simply taking the Imax camera down inside the sub presented difficulties because of the camera's size and the size of the stock. An Imax film frame is 10 times larger than 35mm and one 1000-foot roll lasts three minutes. But as Low points out, "It doesn't make sense to take the camera down 13,000 feet in a robot or with the camera mounted outside the sub with only three minutes of film."

The solution was to mount the camera in the center





porthole, which provided the cameraman with a clear view with no obstructions from the sub. The pilot was left to steer the 20-ton submersible looking through the smaller left-hand porthole while the camera assistant watched out the right side. Often the steering was done via a combination of the Imax viewfinder and a video feed.

"It's difficult to explore a shipwreck when your main viewport is filled up with a big camera," says Low. "It's very confusing down there. A lot of the time you don't know where you are, the subs are stirring up sediment, and you're trying simultaneously to concentrate on getting the best shot and avoid getting caught in the wreck. And although it's an advantage for filming to work with two subs, sometimes you're just doubling the confusion, trying to figure out where you are and where the other sub is in relation to you. Fortunately the Russians were fantastic to work with — professional, skillful, and very determined to make this a spectacular film."

The fact that the Russians allowed the cameramen to have their own assistants, operating the subs with a three-man crew consisting of one pilot, one cameraman and one assistant, was important for filming in Imax. "The loading was a very awkward, difficult process," says Low. "We had excellent camera assistants — Gord Harris and Bill Reeve from Imax and Per Inge-Schei — who all dove. In many ways their job was more difficult than the operator's because of the constant loading process in a cramped space."

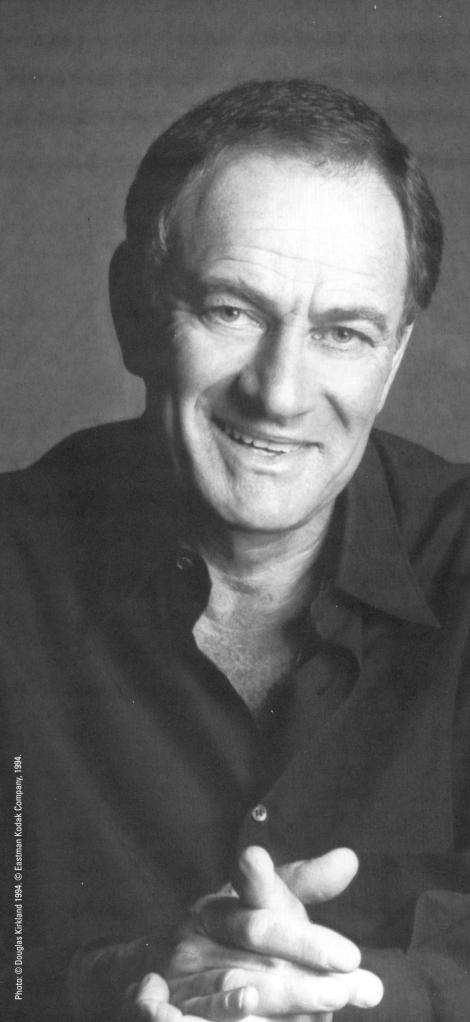
Eight to ten thousand feet of 65mm negative film was taken down on each dive. With the camera, the stock and three men, there was no room to spare in the sphere, which was six-and-a-half feet high and five feet wide.

The stock Low chose was Eastman Kodak 5296, rated at 400

to get a better negative. "We find in Imax that overexposure, especially with the high-speed stocks, is quite a strong advantage," he explains. "We were very happy with the 96. We couldn't have done this film as well without it. The stock has improved a great deal in the last few years and if we had done the expedition in 1985 we wouldn't have had such a good stock to work with."

The single most crucial factor in being able to film the Titanic in Imax was having sufficient light. "The amount of light necessary to shoot Imax is considerably greater than other formats because the field angle is greater," says Low. "Everything else being equal, we couldn't focus our lights as well as you might in a smaller format because we needed to cover a wider area. We used primarily a 40mm lens which gave us about an 80-degree angle through the flat port. Shooting through a flat port makes the problem worse because it makes the lens about 30 percent longer, which means to get the wide angle you need in Imax you have to move further back, which makes it harder to light. Couple that with our slow lenses — our fastest lens was f/4 - and to sufficiently cover the field of view of an Imax camera we needed about five times the light you would normally need."

The problem was solved for the most part by the development of HMI lights for deep ocean use. Al Giddings, one of the leaders of the expedition, was filming his own television special for CBS. He had used HMIs in shallow water on The Abyss, and is a big believer in the technology for underwater photography. "I think his involvement early on was key to the success of this project," says Low. "Without Al we would have been intimidated by the idea of developing deep water HMIs in the six months we had left, since the implosion of a single light could destroy a sub. And with only off-the-shelf tungsten bulbs we would have had



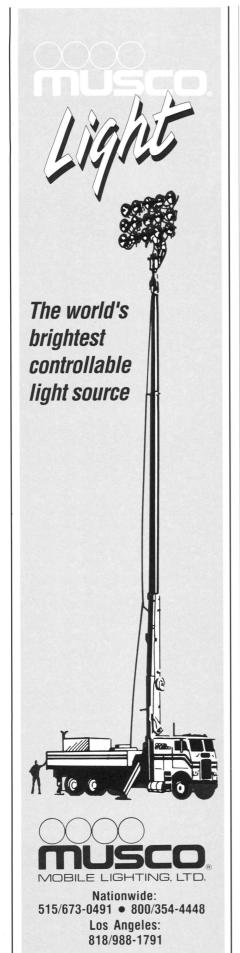
# O W E N R O I Z M A N S F I L M

"I was only 34 when I shot 'The French Connection.' It was the first time I lit low-key scenes at night. I practiced lighting with my wife sitting in our car parked in a dark garage. I wanted to feel the mood. That's still my approach to lighting. It has to feel realistic, even in the most stylized situations. I'm fascinated by light. Any time I go anywhere day or night, I could be talking to somebody, and realize I'm looking at how the light falls on and around them...the brightness and the shadows...the colors bouncing off flowers and trees and mottling their face. I don't know if I was born that way, but I believe it's a talent like being able to carry a tune. I've always read scripts visually by forming images in my mind. For me, the most important thing is transporting the audience into the story without them realizing it by capturing the essence of the mood on film."

Owen Poying

Owen Roizman has earned Oscar® nominations for "The French Connection," "The Exorcist," "Tootsie" and "Network." His other credits include "Three Days of the Condor," "Havana," "Absence of Malice," "Grand Canyon," "Wyatt Earp," "True Confessions," "Play It Again, Sam" and "The Heartbreak Kid." He is currently shooting "Paris Match."





very disappointing results."

Chris Nicholson of Deep Sea Systems and Mark Olsson of Deep Sea Power and Light worked with the technology that had been developed for *The Abyss* and repackaged it for 6000 psi, quickly developing the special pressure housings, reflectors and light sources needed.

Each submarine was outfitted with four 1200-watt HMI lights and four 1000-watt tungsten lights. The lights were placed out on a boom, 12 feet from the lens. "The combination of higher performance lights plus two very powerful subs meant we were probably able to deliver about 20 times the light available on earlier expeditions, which is essential in Imax," says Low. "It certainly wasn't overkill. We could have used even more."

The intention was obviously not to light the whole ship, which measured 883 feet intact and now lies in two pieces 2,000 feet apart. At most they could light a 100-foot-square patch, which produced a gloomy long shot, without full exposure. The best and brightest shots with a strong exposure (5/6) came from lighting an approximately 20-foot square.

The underwater visibility at 12,500 feet was often as good as 100 feet. As scientists on this expedition found, the ocean is very active at that depth, with strong currents, so there could be spectacularly clear conditions during one dive and quite poor visibility on the next. Focus, according to Low, was "reasonably manageable. The assistant did the focus pulling from a porthole that wasn't really looking at the right thing, so there was a bit of guesswork involved, but we never got into any macro stuff except in the debris field, and the 40mm Imax lens is pretty forgiving, particularly at 5/6. After you get out about 15 or 20 feet the depth of field is fairly reasonable, so we normally set the focus at about 15 or 20 feet, and beyond that the image starts to get soft anyway

because of the water."

The footage is impressive and unsettling; the vast bow of the *Titanic* seems to belong on the Imax screen. It delivers an impact and sense of awe that wouldn't translate through any other medium. And the huge screen emphasizes the humanity and vulnerability inherent in one small, battered shoe or a leather valise, still latched.

Imax's Picard, co-executive producer of the film, describes it as "both beautiful and chilling; you feel you are there, part of the adventure of the dive and an observer of the whole tragedy."

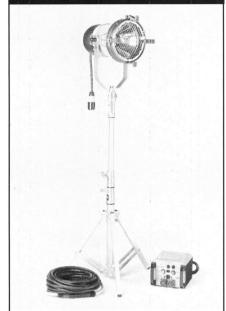
Of course, spectacular images are not enough to make a successful film, a criticism that has plagued some Imax films through the company's 23-year history. Even as Low was concentrating on getting the goods down below, he was worried about developing a story that would do the images justice.

"I knew it would be a terrific storytelling challenge as well as a technical challenge because it's been covered so many different ways before. We decided that an adventure documentary based around the Russian experience, with entirely new kinds of characters, would be an exciting way to tell the story."

On board the *Keldysh*, Low quickly recognized the cinematic gold mine he had in the cast of characters assembled. "The expedition members are absolutely wild and amazing people, as outrageous as anything you'll ever see in a drama," he says with enthusiasm.

The characters in *Titanica*, all real members of the expedition, are obsessed with getting to the *Titanic*, for different reasons. Dr. Anatoly Sagalevitch is the leader of the expedition. An engineer trying to save his research vessels as his country falls into chaos, he has a kind of sweet, Russian romance. He also bears the responsibility of seeing that no artifacts are brought up on this





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3500 West Magnolia Blvd. Burbank, CA 91503 (818) 843-4560 IN CA (800) 692-6700 Nationwide (800) 325-7674 expedition, only mud and metal samples for the scientists. Ralph White, an expert on the Titanic, is obsessed with treasure; Sagalevitch describes him lightly in the film as "a dangerous man." Emory Kristof, a renowned National Geographic photographer, is brash and cynical. Dr. "Big Lev" Moskalev is the head biologist, studying the distribution of the "new passengers" on the Titanic and entertaining his colleagues with dramatic impersonations of the sea life he is seeking. Canadian geologist Dr. Steve Blasco is motivated by mud. Evgeny Chernjaev is a shy and quiet sub pilot whom Low describes as "the most brave and skillful of all the people on the ship."

Remaining on board the Keldysh is Charlie Sachs, a historian who believes he is the reincarnation of Titanic Captain Smith. The lone dissenting voice on the voyage is the ship's painter, who makes religious paintings in the ship's boiler room and believes it is not necessary to "dig in the mud to understand tragedy."

These men and their obsessions with the *Titanic* are contrasted throughout the film with the story of Eva Hart, an 89-yearold *Titanic* survivor who says the shipwreck has "dominated" her whole life. She was seven years old when her father booked the family on the Titanic, to the dismay of Eva's mother, who believed that to say a ship was unsinkable was "flying in the face of the Almighty." She and her mother survived, and Eva has clear memories of the night the unsinkable Titanic went down, taking her father and 1,521 others with it.

Eerie images of the Titanic as she now lies on the ocean floor, broken and twisted, in rivers of rust, are also contrasted with exquisitely preserved archive photographs of the ship in pristine condition before her ill-fated maiden voyage in 1912. Taken from the original 8" x 10"

glass plate negatives, the photographs are stunning on the giant screen. Low decided to enhance Ms. Hart's story by using computer digital technology to add key figures to several photo-

Although the main purpose of the expedition was to bring back footage of the *Titanic*, Low and surface photographer Andrew Kitzanuk took advantage of the four weeks spent floating above the shipwreck. The majority of Titanica was shot onboard the Keldysh, but in order to film the sub interiors Low had a full size MIR mock-up built. He filmed re-enactments of the character interaction on the three dives featured in the film, which are compressed from the eight dives filmed.

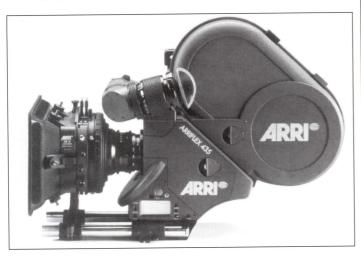
Low also made use of two techniques which have been traditionally avoided in Imax. He used a great deal of sync sound, which is difficult in Imax because of the 200-pound blimp required, and he didn't shy away from facial close-ups, which some skeptics have suggested would be disturbing on the giant screen. The emphasis on character seems to have paid off as many audience members claim that for them, the images of the Titanic take a back seat to the characters.

In fact, the Imax audience has a better view of the Titanic than the men in the subs. Low was pleased with the images they brought up. "We were able to put on a large-format film the kind of image you would see if you were in the submarine, or better, and although that's not a phenomenal daylight shot, it's improved from the flashlight-in the-graveyard effect of earlier expeditions. This is more like headlights in a graveyard, which for the subject is entirely appropriate. It's a very dark, spooky place and the lighting is aesthetically perfect. It's quite a spectacular way to visit the world's greatest shipwreck."



## TPDATE

#### **NEW ARRI 435**



The new ARRI 435 camera.

The new Arriflex 435 combines twenty-first century sophistication with ARRI's traditional mechanical excellence to set a new standard of quality for 35mm MOS cameras. Recently introduced at the 1994 ShowBiz Europe Exposition in Munich, the 435 won high marks for its compact modular design. The 435's superior viewing system, and its compatibility with both old and new ARRI camera systems made it an instant "hit" with the European camera community. Features include:

**COMPATIBILITY:** The ARRI 435 is compatible with many ARRI 535 accessories and components. Also, the 435 can use 35-3 and 2C magazines, extending the life of existing equipment inventories.

**PRECISION MOVEMENT:** The 435's 5-link movement with dual registration pins and pull-down claw assures precise image steadiness to optical printer specifications.

ADJUSTABLE SHUTTER: The standard mechanically adjustable mirror shutter in the 435 varies from 15° to 180° with locking positions at 15° intervals, as well as at 144° and 172.8°. An electronically adjustable mirror shutter is optional.

**ADVANCED FINDER DESIGN:** The 435's exceptionally bright finder can be pivoted on two axes, and used on both sides of the camera. Arriglow frame illumination is optional.

HIGH SPEED OPERATION: The 435 operates from 1 to 150fps (1 to 130fps with 35-3/2C mags). It is quartz accurate to 0.001fps, with fixed speeds of 24, 25, 29.97 and 30 fps.

**SUPER 35:** The 435 adapts easily for Super 35, and its finder covers the full Super 35 format.

LCD DISPLAY: The 435's large,

clear LCD display shows camera status information and warning messages in the same format as the ARRI 535B and 16SR-3.

**TIME CODE:** Time code capability is built into the ARRI 435.

100% VIDEO: With its optional 100% video finder, the ARRI 435 weighs only 11.5 lbs, and is perfect for motion control and remote applications.

**REMOTE** CONTROL: A modular electronics interface connects the ARRI 435 to remote control devices.

**VIDEO ASSIST:** The CCD-2 1/2" video camera connects to the 435 via a 535B-type optical adaptor.

**PL MOUNT:** The 435's PL lens mount accepts all current ARRI lenses. **24 VOLT OPERATION:** The ARRI 435 uses the same 24V DC batteries as other modern ARRI cameras.

**HAND-HELD COMFORT:** The 435's ergonomic design supports comfortable hand-held operation. A shoulder magazine is in development.

RUGGED LIGHTWEIGHT DESIGN: In standard configuration without mag or lens, the ARRI 435 weighs only 14.3 lbs. Like all ARRI cameras, the 435 is built for reliable operation, low maintenance and a long life.

## **535B STEADICAM**MAG AND VIDEO FINDER



New LM-1 400' magazine for Steadicam use.

Arriflex has developed two new components to specially configure the popular ARRI 535B camera for Steadicam applications. The quiet new LM-1 400' vertical magazine is made of lightweight but strong materials, such as magnesium and carbon fiber laminate. The VT-1 100% video finder conveniently replaces

Continued on page 4

#### ROB DRAPER, A.C.S.

Not long ago, Rob Draper's work as a cameraman could only be seen on one local television station in Wagga-Wagga, Australia. Today, Draper's award-winfast-paced cinematography appears regularly on U.S. network and cable TV, as well as in theatrical release around the world. In the last four years, Draper has garnered twelve nominations for major television awards, and four top prizes. Most recently, he received a 1994 A.C.S. Golden Tripod Award for Profit of Evil - The Ervil LeBaron Story, and a 1994 A.S.C. nomination for the miniseries A Matter of Justice. Draper's 1990s feature films include Halloween 5, Tales From the Darkside: The Movie, and Dr. Giggles. All of his work since 1992 has been shot with ARRI 535 cameras.



Rob Draper, A.C.S.

Rob Draper is a very busy man. A look at his 1994 schedule alone is daunting: Draper began the year with three films in the Universal Pictures' *Another Midnight Run* "Action Pack" series, which aired on Fox TV. He followed those with *Frame Up*, with Richard

Crenna, for NBC. Next came Cagney & Lacey – The Return, and Cagney & Lacey – Together Again for CBS, with Tyne Daly and Sharon Gless. In July Draper completed photography on Cries From the Heart, also for CBS, which stars Patty Duke and Melissa

"I haven't wanted to look at another camera since I first saw the 535."

Gilbert. Obviously, Draper is accustomed to producing quality results fast. His willingness to adopt any new technology that can get the job done better or more quickly has been one of the hallmarks of his success.

One of the first cinematographers to Continued on page 4

#### **KEN KELSCH**

About the only thing that Ken Kelsch hasn't done in his career as a cinematographer is to play it safe. For the second time this vear, Kelsch finds himself in prison, this time to shoot Killer, starring James Woods as a depression era serial murderer. Kelsch just finished The Addiction, "a black and white feminist vampire movie" with Lily Taylor, Christopher Walken and Annabella Sciorra, directed by Abel Ferrara. Before that, he "did time" as DP on Condition Red with Cynda Williams and James Russo, immediately after finishing Spike Lee's DROP Squad. Other

recent work includes *Dangerous Game* with Madonna, Harvey Keitel and James Russo, and "the imfamous" *Bad Lieutenant*, also with Keitel and Ferrara. And all this sounds tame compared to assignments which used to find Kelsch dodging bullets to bring footage back from the world's trouble spots.

In addition to his feature work, Kelsch finds time to run Stampede Film and Video, which supplies complete lighting and grip trucks for all types of production.

> "We estimate that we can save about half the time in post this way by working with only selected takes."

Kelsch also squeezes in commercials, which have given him the best opportunities to explore the possibilities of the ARRI 535 and 16SR-3 camera systems.

Working with producer Peter Marshall at Manhattan Film Works, Kelsch has



#### Ken Kelsch

been shooting spots with the 16SR-3 using time code. "We estimate that we can save about half the time in post this way by working with only selected takes," Kelsch observes. Kelsch praises the "incredible viewing systems" in current ARRI cameras. He told us about a recent spot he did for Field and Stream Magazine, literally in the Hudson River. "The shot called for us to light and shoot monofilament fishing line," he recalled. "With any other viewing system, we would never have been able to SEE it, much less photograph it."

Kelsch understands the gaffer's desire to heft smaller fixtures, but he prefers the larger-lensed ARRI HMI and quartz lights. He points out that "with today's emulsions and filmmaking style, we use bigger lights with more diffusion to soften shadows." Kelsch particularly likes the ARRISUN 12K fresnel and the 4K PAR.

Whether he's working in a prison, in a river or on a sound stage, Ken Kelsch is one director of photography who really pushes the limits of possibility and puts Arriflex equipment to the test. We enjoy working with him, and always find the feedback he gives us invaluable.



#### Cherry Lane Documentary Uses Time Code, Super 16

To produce **ROBBIE ROBERTSON**: A RETROSPECTIVE (From The Band to the Rock N' Roll Hall of Fame), Cherry Lane Video chose technology both to take advantage of the most efficient post-production techniques currently available, and to maximize the product's marketability. Interviews for the documentary about Robertson, guitarist and chief songwriter for THE BAND during its period of mass-market success in the 1960s and 70s, were shot in the Super 16 format with 16SR-3s, utilizing time code. "Super 16 was chosen because we anticipate an international market, and compatibility with HDTV is desirable," comments Associate Producer Kathleen Brawitsch. Time code facilitated the editing of a video product that incorporates material originated in both video and film.

Soon to be released for broadcast and to the home video market, *ROBBIE ROBERTSON: A RETROSPECTIVE* features interviews with Robertson and colleagues in the music and film industries. In a multi-camera sequence, Robertson chats with director Martin Scorsese, whose 1978 feature, *The Last Waltz*, documented THE BAND's final concert with Robertson. Historical footage of THE BAND backing Bob Dylan and clips from guitarist Eric Clapton's tribute to Robertson and THE BAND at the 1994 Rock N' Roll Hall of Fame induction ceremony are also featured.

Director of Photography on **ROBBIE ROBERTSON:** A **RETROSPECTIVE** was Harris Savides. Post production was done at Foto-Kem and at Digital Magic in California, both of which are equipped with ARRI FIS Time Code Readers.

#### 535 ON CLOCKERS

Photography has recently been completed on Universal Pictures' *Clockers*, an urban drama directed by Spike Lee, based on a novel by Academy Award winner Richard Price. Producers are Martin Scorsese and Spike Lee, and stars include Harvey Keitel, John Tuturro and Del-

roy Lindo. As director of photography, Lee chose newcomer Malik Sayeed, who makes his feature film debut with *Clockers*. The principal camera on *Clockers* was an ARRI 535A.

Sayeed previously collaborated with Lee on commercials for Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream and ESPN basketball, and music videos featuring Branford Marsalis, the Crooklyn Dodgers, and Bruce Hornsby. Although he is only twenty-six, Sayeed has nine years of professional experience. Of his work on *Clockers*, Sayeed says: "It irritates me when I shoot something that

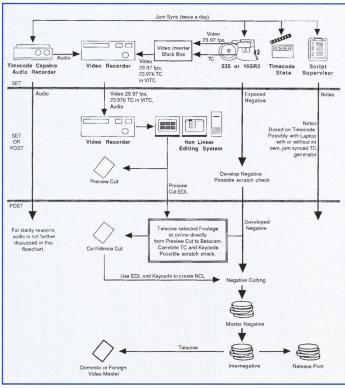


DP Malik Sayeed, on the set of Spike Lee's Clockers Photo by David Lee

looks normal. I tried to manipulate the texture of the film to give a feeling of something that has a lot more weight to it visually. For the most part, I'm happy with what I tried to do, but its only the tip of the iceberg."

The camera crew on *Clockers* included Operator Geary McLeod and First Assistant Floyd Rance. Spike Lee's *Mo'Better Blues* (1990), *Jungle Fever* (1991), *Malcolm X* (1992) and *Crooklyn* (1994) were also shot with ARRI camera equipment.

#### TIME CODE ON FILM



Using Time Code to create a Preview Cut on a non-linear editing system

#### What is SMPTE Time Code?

SMPTE Time Code was developed twenty-five years ago to bring to video editing the precision that had always been possible in editing film. Video tape lacks edge numbers or visible images to use in locating and marking edit points. In 1969 SMPTE (The Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers) established a standard electronic, machine-readable frame-identification code which was also adopted by EBU (The European Broadcasting Union). SMPTE Time Code consists of an 80-bit binary pulse-coded signal, which identifies each frame by hour, minute, second and frame number. It includes space for eight alphanumeric "userbits."

#### What Is Time Code On Film?

Twenty years ago, experiments began with machine-readable frame numbers placed on the edge of film stock, in an attempt to end reliance on the clapstick slate as the means of synchronizing film with audio. By 1980, cameras that could record edge numbers on film in SMPTE-type formats were widely avail-

able, but so was the "electronic slate," which proved to be a more cost-effective synching device.

In the mid 1980s there was interest in time-code-on-film technology to facilitate "electronic" editing for film, but industry economics did not yet support it. The digital revolution of the last ten vears, plus increasing demand for material originating on film and released in video, have made the use of time code on film practical. All current ARRI cameras can write a continuous barcode onto film that conforms to SMPTE standards for placement and recording methods. A SMPTE time code word is written on each film frame. The ARRI FIS Time Code Reading System reads this barcode, and outputs it to post-production equipment.

#### If You Record Time Code On Film, What Can You Do With It?

• Time code on film can automatically synchronize film and audio in post production, eliminating the need for slates in production. This is ideal for multi-camera situations.

- Time code can be included in script notes made during production, making it easier to locate film clips later.
- Time code on film can be put into a database that correlates it with audio time code, scene and take information and other data to speed the editing process
- Time code on film can be recorded as a "burned-in window" on the output from a video tap, and used to create an edit decision list. Selected portions of the negative can be identified for processing and/or transfer to video, saving telecine and laboratory costs.

#### Time Code Features of ARRI Products

•535 System: Time code is recorded in the linear motion portion of the film path. The Time Code Module optically records the barcode on the camera right side of the film between the perforations and the exposed frame. The Time Code Module can receive its setting information from the 535's integral time code generator, or from any code-generating device. The TCS (time code sensitivity) adjustment on the magazine sets the light intensity of the Time Code Module LED to match the exposure characteristics of the film stock.

The 535A camera offers time code at 24, 25, 29.97 and 30 fps, with 24, 25, and 30 fps as non-drop frame, and 29.97 fps as drop frame. In the 535B camera, time code speeds are 24, 25, 23.976, 29.97 and 30 fps, all non-drop frame. The 535B provides a continuous

- output of time code, which can be used to make a "burn-in" or "window dub" video tape, or to "jam sync", (provide a master clock to other time code devices on the set).
- •435: Time Code Module and TCS adjustment are located in the body of the camera at the point where the film loop enters from the magazine. Time code speeds are identical to the 535B and all are non-drop frame.
- 168R-3: The time code recorder is in the magazine, as is the TCS adjustment. The barcode is placed on the film edge opposite the perforations. Time code is non-drop frame, and speeds match those of the 535B and 435. The 16SR-3 outputs time code continuously.
- •LCC Laptop Camera Controller: The LCC accepts time code information from the camera, and logs it in a database that can be used to generate automatic camera reports, or to feed information to computers used in post production.
- •FIS Film Ident/Sync System: The reasonably priced ARRI FIS System reads SMPTE Time Code and Kodak Keykode. It consists of interchangeable 16 and 35 mm reader heads, and an FCC unit that powers the reader head and outputs time code, Keykode and perf signals. The FIS heads read time code and Keykode on any edge or on opposing edges of positive or negative film, in forward or reverse. Arriflex will provide assistance installing the FIS system at any post production facility.

Post Production Facilities With Installed ARRI FIS Readers

NOTE: Equipment that can utilize film time code varies widely among post houses, and not all facilities are equipped to process time code on both 16 and 35 mm film. Please contact Arriflex and your post production facility for complete information BEFORE you enter the telecine or edit suite, to be certain that your needs can be met in the best possible way.

ATLANTA Crawford Communications 404-876-7149

CHICAGO Editel 312-440-2360

**DENVER**Cross Point
Productions
303-232-9572

LOS ANGELES/ HOLLYWOOD Complete Post 213-467-1244 Digital Magic 310-315-4270

Foto-Kem 818-846-3101 Video Craftsman 213-464-4351

305-653-7440

MIAMI Broade Du Art 212-757-4580 Editel 212-867-4000 Manhattan Transfer

**NEW YORK** 

212-687-4000 Post Perfect 212-972-3400

The Tape House 212-557-4949 SALT LAKE CITY RMS Transfer 801-973-5416

**SAN FRANCISCO** *American Zoetrope 415-788-7500* 

SEATTLE
Pinnacle Post
206-443-1000

#### **ARRI SHOWCASE**

#### **NEW FINDER EXTENDERS:** FOR THE 435 & 535B...

Our new Finder Extender for the 435 and 535B cameras is a full 12" long and features switchable 2X magnification.

#### ...AND THE 16SR-3

The new 10" Finder Extender for the 16SR-3 camera is 3" longer than the prior model. In addition to switchable 2X magnification, it offers a flip-in contrast filter



New ARRI Finder Extender for 435 and 535B cameras

#### RCU-1 REMOTE CONTROL UNIT

The RCU-1 is the simplest remote device available for programming and controlling the running speed of all current ARRI cameras, and the shutter angle of cameras equipped with electronically adjustable shutters. Shutter/speed ramping programs can be created, stored and automatically executed on the RCU-1. Speed and shutter angle can also be set manually with a rotary knob. The



RCU-1 Remote Control Unit

RCU-1's highly readable LCD display shows speed and shutter angle data, plus complete camera status details including warning messages. The RCU-1 is accurate to 0.001 frame, or 0.1°

#### MB-18 4x5.65 MATTE BOX

The MB-18 is a new production matte box optimized for Super 16 use. It includes three rectangular stages, which each hold two 4" x 5.65" filters. Filters can be dropped in, passed through, or rotated. One stage offers geared rotation controlled by a rotary knob or a flexible shaft. A round stage holds a 138mm filter All 16 format lenses with focal lengths 6mm or longer can be used with the MB-18, as can all 35 format lenses 14mm or longer.



MB-18 Super 16 Matte Box

Accessories include additional filter stages, filter frames and masks. Like all ARRI matte boxes, the MB-18 features a "swing away" design to accommodate guick lens changes.

#### ICU IRIS CONTROL UNIT

The new ARRI ICU Iris Control Unit provides automatic exposure control for any lens used with any ARRI camera. The ICU monitors the camera frame rate. When it senses a change in speed, the ICU calculates and changes the lens F-stop in order to maintain constant exposure. The ICU's capacity to remember and reset the iris to the Fstop at which it began each take makes it easy to do repeated takes requiring fps changes. A calibration function allows the ICU to learn the end



**ARRI ICU Iris Control System** 

stops of the iris ring on any lens to prevent mechanical stress in operation. The ICU uses the same drive motor as the ARRI LCS zoom and focus control system. The camera can power the ICU, or it can accept power from external 12V and 24V batteries. Reasonably priced ICU packages, including handheld controller, motor and cables, are currently available from Arriflex.

#### **REAL TIME:** THE ARRI WATCH

Get to the set on time with the efficient and attractive ARRI Watch. Of course, since it comes from Arriflex, the ARRI Watch features a high-quality precision quartz movement. It also has luminous hands and a black luminous dial for those night shoots. And there's a date window in the dial. Supplied in a brush-finish stainless-steel case with a scratch-resistant glass crystal, our watch comes with both black leather and green nylon straps. It



carries a three year warranty. Arriflex is pleased that the latest model ARRI watch is a higher quality product at a reduced price! It can be purchased directly from Arriflex for \$75.00.

535B STEADICAM

the standard viewfinder module. The

535B Steadicam package made its first U.S. appearance in June 1994, at Showbiz West in Los Angeles, where it was demonstrated by Paul Taylor. Taylor's recent work as a Steadicam operator includes the Disney feature Tall Tales with cinematographer Janusz Kaminski and the TV series Star Trek: The Next Generation with DP Jonathan West.

"The magazine/camera combination is extremely well balanced for Steadicam, because it puts most of the mass directly

over the post," comments Taylor. "The mag is very lightweight, and it's easy to thread. The 100% video viewfinder system is incredibly bright and sharp; on my Steadicam 'green screen' I can actually see the change as the assistant racks focus!" Taylor also finds that "the changeover from studio configuration to Steadicam is simple and fast."

Taylor showed the 535B to many Steadicam operators at Showbiz. "We did side-by-side tests with other cameras popular for Steadicam, and the 535B compared very favorably."

#### **DRAPER** Continue from first page

test the 535A's sophisticated capabilities, Draper has found ample opportunity to utilize its shutter/speed ramping programming. "I haven't wanted to look at another camera since I first saw the 535," Draper told us last January. He has since added a 535B to his package. He's impressed with the silent operation of both cameras. "During a courtroom scene on Cries From the Heart, the sound mixer told me he'd never been on such a quiet two camera

set", Draper recounted.

Draper is already a fan of the new ARRI LCC Laptop Camera Controller. "I'm certainly not a computer buff, but I love it," Draper comments. He observes that "producers are always impressed to see us use it." On a more serious note, Draper sees that "the 535 has many possibilities that can be fully explored with the LCC."

We are certain that quick, creative thinking in demanding production situations will continue to make Rob Draper a cinematographer to watch in the nineties.

#### LAPTOP CAMERA **CONTROLLER** -IT'S NOW AVAILABLE

The ARRI LCC Laptop Camera Controller is in stock for immediate delivery. The first software interface for two-way communication between state-of-the-art motion picture cameras and contemporary computers, the LCC controls camera functions, maintains a database of camera status information, does film accounting and prints camera reports. The LCC works with ARRI



**ARRI LCC Laptop Camera Controller** software runs on a Macintosh PowerBook.

535, 435 and 16SR-3 cameras, and runs on any System 7 or later Macintosh PowerBook. The LCC package includes software, Mac-to-camera connecting cables and a user's manual. List price is \$555.00.

#### **PRODUCT INFORMATION**

For complete specifications, pricing and availability information on products that appear in the ARRI Update, contact the Arriflex Customer Service Department at either of our offices.

#### **CompuServe**

Electronic mail can now be left for Arriflex 24 hours a day! To send ARRI a message, call 72052,175@COMPUSERVE.COM on the Internet.



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#### Interview With the Vampire Taps New Vein

The big-screen version of Anne Rice's toothsome best-seller, featuring elegant photography by Philippe Rousselot, AFC, gives undead cinema an invigorating transfusion.

#### by Stephen Pizzello

After completing principal photography on Interview With the Vampire, Academy Award-winning cinematographer Philippe Rousselot, AFC could sympathize with the plight of the film's

undead protagonists. Over the course of a 100-day shoot that involved just two halfdays of daytime photography, Rousselot began to wonder if he would sprout fangs himself.

"Actually, on a schedule like that, you turn more into a zombie than a vampire," he quips in his quintessentially French accent. "Vampires thrive on that kind of situation, but we were more like victims."

The crew's endurance paid off in a cinematic spectacle that

proved to be a sensation at the nation's box offices, racking up more than \$36 million in ticket sales in its opening weekend the biggest opening ever for an R-

rated film. Combining an imaginative script, risky casting, topdrawer costuming and production design, some deft direction by Neil Jordan and Rousselot's sublime cinematography, the

film manages to stake out new terrain for subject matter that's older than the cinema itself. According to Rousselot, the filmmakers succeeded in their quest

its own."

The result of this ambition is an unconventional vampire epic that tracks its disconsolate anti-hero, Louis Pointe du

for a fresh perspective by assiduously avoiding traditional vampire photography.

"During one of my conversations with Neil, we decided we didn't want this film

to resemble any other vampire or horror movies," Rousselot recalls. "It's not necessarily against the genre, but we didn't want to get into genre conventions. I've seen and enjoyed many vampire films, such as those by F.W. Murnau (Nosferatu, 1921) and Carl Dreyer (Vampyr, 1931), but the style of photography has changed enormously in this area, and Neil and I didn't want to play the game of a 'genre film.' We wanted to create a film that would have a style of

The vampire Lestat (Tom Cruise) prepares to sink his fangs into Louis (Brad Pitt).



would-be mother are imprisoned in a well, where they are soon incinerated by the morning sun; Louis is walled up in a coffin. Rescued by Armand, an enraged Louis destroys the vampire troupe and abandons his would-be mentor. His soul in tatters, Louis endures a century of melancholic solitude until an unexpected reunion with a devitalized Lestat inspires him to relate the story of his life to the interviewer. "My reading of this story

"My reading of this story is that Lestat and Louis are actually a pair of charming serial killers who go through the centuries without getting caught," says Rousselot. "We felt that making the traditional atmospheric vampire movie would have taken all of the drama out of the story by making it too cartoony. It was much more interesting to present

Above: Lestat ponders eternity by candlelight. Rousselot notes that modern film stocks and equipment have made it much easier for filmmakers to achieve authentic period lighting. Right: Rousselot used Chinese lanterns to create the soft look he was after. Here, he consults his meter as he sculpts the lighting within an ornate fireplace.

Lac (Brad Pitt), from late 18thcentury New Orleans to presentday San Francisco, where he relates his unique nocturnal experiences to an incredulous interviewer (Christian Slater, assuming the role originally assigned to the late River Phoenix).

The vampire's tale is told in sumptuous period flashbacks that constitute the bulk of the film's narration: the owner of a large plantation, Louis has lost his will to live after the untimely death of his beloved wife and infant daughter. Accepting eternal damnation as an alternative to suicide, Louis allows the foppish, malevolent vampire Lestat (Tom Cruise) to turn him into a creature of the night. When Louis begins to mourn the loss of his humanity, Lestat provides his protégé with company in the form of a vampire child, the mischievous Claudia (Kirsten Dunst). Inevitably, Lestat's dysfunctional "family" self-destructs; after twice attempting to murder Lestat, Louis and Claudia flee to Paris, where they encounter an undead theatrical troupe led by the suave and courtly Armand (Antonio Banderas), who, at 400, is pre-



sumed to be the world's oldest living vampire. Disgusted by the troupe's amoral decadence, but tempted to spend eternity with the worldly Armand, Louis reluctantly complies with Claudia's demand that he create a vampire "mother" who will take his place at her side.

A happy resolution is not in the cards, however, and the vampire troupe, sadistically bent on avenging the "murder" of Lestat, conspires to destroy Claudia and her companions. The vampire child and her

the characters in the normal context of their time periods and environments. This approach made the vampirism seem much more extraordinary. To shoot people with capes and big teeth and all of the usual gore and tricks of vampire movies would have made it all seem a bit unreal."

A film with trappings as elaborate as *Interview's* cries out for careful planning in preproduction, but this luxury was denied to *Interview's* director of photography, who agreed to shoot the picture while in the

midst of another project. "I was sent the book at a time when I knew I couldn't do the film," Rousselot recalls, "so I read it without really thinking about the job. But the film was postponed, so the studio called me back and sent me a script to read. Because I was working on another film in France, I had no time at all for prep on *Interview*. I was struggling to finish the other picture, and when I was done I had four days to pack.

"I did get the chance to look at some sketches of [production designer] Dante Ferretti's sets," he says. "They were fantastic, and I knew I wouldn't have to discuss that aspect very much. When I finally arrived in the U.S., I went to New Orleans for two or three days to see some of the sets, then I rushed to L.A. to do some makeup tests, then I went up to San Francisco to check our locations there. After that, I went back to New Orleans and we started to shoot. By then, I was a wreck, just trying to survive the exhaustion. It was pretty bad, but on the other hand maybe it was also good; when you don't have time to prep, there's less chance of making false or wrong decisions."

It did help that Rousselot had already collaborated with Jordan, whose eclectic resumé (Mona Lisa, We're No Angels, The Miracle, The Crying Game) includes two prior forays into the phantasmagorical, 1985's The Company of Wolves and the 1988 comedy High Spirits. "I had previously worked with Neil and his longtime camera operator, Michael Roberts, on two films: We're No Angels and The Miracle," notes Rousselot. "Neil and Michael have a very easygoing relationship; they'd break down the scenes, and then I'd come in and light the shots. Michael was not available for Interview, so Neil hired another operator I liked very much, Anastas Michos. It was a different arrangment, because we were all free when we worked with the shots. Neil has a



Brad Pitt (back to camera), Christian Slater and director Neil Jordan discuss the next take. Rousselot gave the film's modern scenes a sharper edge by using more lights and jumping from his "period stop" of 2.8 to a 4 or 4.5.

45

fairly good idea of the way he wants to shoot things, and the kinds of shots he wants to achieve. He's pretty precise, but it's an open situation where everyone has some input."

In addition to his three pairings with Jordan, Rousselot's credits include A River Runs Through It, which earned him his first Academy Award; Hope and Glory and Henry and June, both of which garnered Oscar nominations for cinematography; and a stable of other visual stunners, such as Peppermint Soda, Diva, The Moon in the Gutter, The Emerald Forest, Dangerous Liaisons and The *Bear*. The cinematographer says that he decided upon a career in motion pictures at the tender age of 11. "When I finished high school, I went to film school at Vaugirard in France, which is now called Ecole Louis Lumière," he relates. "I started film school when I was 19 and got out at 21. After that, I got jobs doing all kinds of stuff — driving cars for TV crews, things like that. By the time I was 27, I was a director of photography."

Although Rousselot's admirers often describe his work as "painterly," he humbly deflects the compliment. "I do draw or paint once in a while, but I'm quite a bad painter!" he insists with a chuckle. "I started painting after I became a cameraman, so it's not in my background at all. I do know a little bit about the

history of art. Actually, I don't think cinematography and painting have all that much in common; the techniques are quite opposite to each other. Cinematography uses light, and with painting you use pigments. Also, the process is completely different. Painting requires solitude, stillness and time, and you can be very abstract when you paint; it's very difficult to be abstract when you shoot a film. In my opinion, it's not always a very good idea to take one's inspiration from painting. I don't like films where they're obviously trying to copy painters, because to me it always looks like bad painting! I understand painting well enough to know that it's not something you can easily emulate in this business."

Despite his claims to the contrary, Rousselot's work often exhibits a picturesque elegance that merits minute inspection. His work on *Interview* is all the more impressive in light of the film's grinding schedule and Rousselot's lack of prep time.

Since makeup was really the only aspect of the film Rousselot could control prior to shooting, he took extra care in crafting the look of the film's vampiric protagonists. "The makeup affects photography, of course. We were using very white makeups on the vampire characters, because we wanted to create a style that would allow

the audience to see their veins; we were trying to make their skin look almost transparent. The makeups were extremely interesting visually, but after a short while, everybody agreed that they weren't working, that the characters had to be more normal in their appearance. We wound up using much more subtle makeups, and I tried to further tone them down in the photography — diffusing them a bit so you wouldn't see too much of the texture in close-ups. We played around with the look during tests and a few days of shooting, and I decided to light the faces with a bit of warmth to take out some of the whiteness. I used Tiffen's soft effects filters, and I took the lights down with dimmers. Everyone seemed to be happy with that combination."

Rousselot added to this alchemy by tweaking his lighting schemes for the film's leads: "Brad Pitt comes out very well on the screen; he's got a magic face. There are some actors who are like that; no matter what light you apply to them, the audience will find them attractive! The same goes for Tom Cruise, but he

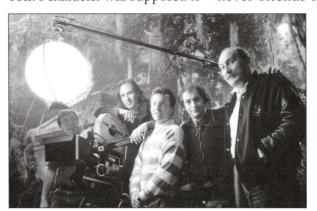
plays a character that's much different from those he's played in the past. Tom wanted to look as thin and gaunt as possible, and he lost a lot of weight for the role. To enhance that, I played the light as high as possible to make his cheeks hollow and bring shadows onto his face without losing the eyes and bringing shadows into the sockets. There was a line where the light generally had to be, and it was very precise; if the light was too low, we'd lose the shadows on the face, and if it was too high, we'd lose the eyes. I didn't use these shadows on Louis and Armand, because it didn't fit their roles. Tom's character was supposed to look a bit less boyish than usual; we tried to make Lestat look more decadent and aristocratic."

Since so much of the picture takes place in near darkness, Rousselot shot the entire film save for three shots — on Kodak's high-speed 5296 stock. A remarkable aspect of the cinematographer's unique style is his ability to walk the tightrope at the low end of the stock's characteristic curve without letting the film slide into inky blackness. This technique can be risky for less experienced cinematographers, but Rousselot's approach, especially on Interview, lends his visuals an understated dignity that never offends the eye. In fact,

Rousselot bridles at the mere thought that his work might ever call unnecessary attention to itself. "I would hate to do anything that is 'eye-catching!" he exclaims with genuine horror in his voice. "I

want the pictures I work on to have a consistent look from beginning to end, without anything sticking out. Obtrusively evecatching scenes can often disrupt the momentum of the story.

"It tends to be the case that I'm usually working at low light levels with soft lighting, at the bottom of the characteristic curve rather than the top," he acknowledges. "I use as little backlight as I can; I try to make my work as invisible as possible. A good chunk of Interview takes place before the invention of electricity. Most of the practical light sources that you see on the screen — oil lamps, candles, gas lights — never give a very harsh light, and they never give strong blue backlight. If you want to simulate the mood of that kind of practical lighting, you have to work with warm, soft, very diffused light.





Chinese-lantern technique for a scene involving Lestat and Claudia (Kirsten Dunst).

Right:

operator

The cinematographer and his

crew. From left:

Anastos Michos

(at camera).

focus puller

Graham Hall,

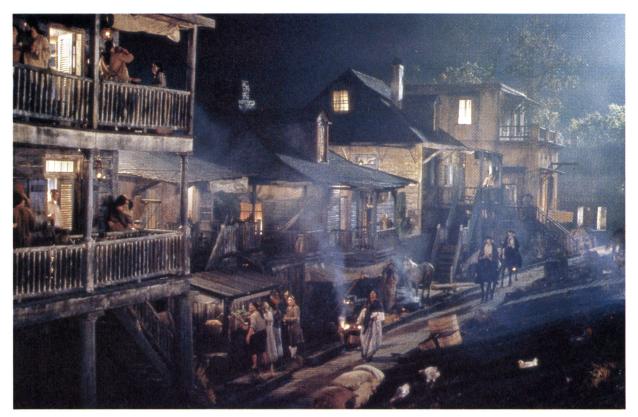
gaffer John

Higgins.

Rousselot, and

Below: Another

example of the



This 18thcentury New Orleans street was just one of the impressive sets designed by Dante . Ferretti. Rousselot used aroups of 10 Space Lights attached to cranes to achieve an "overcast moonlight" look.

Any other approach doesn't work for me."

In his determination to achieve a realistic period ambience, and to maintain complete control of his lamps, Rousselot lit most of his interiors by combining Chinese lanterns and a dimmer system. He points out that advances in technology have made it much easier for modern filmmakers to craft a believable period look. "Barry Lyndon [1975] was one of the most convincing attempts to create something that looked truly authentic," he notes. "It was very well done at the time. Now, of course, we don't have to be as drastic as they were because we have much faster films. I never go down under 2.8, because it's impossible to focus or to do any kind of elaborate shot. In the case of Barry Lyndon, the candlelight scenes were all static shots in which the actors couldn't move too much because of the depth-of-field consideration. Now, you've got people running around with oil lamps in their hands; you can't tell the director, 'I can't do this shot because it's

too complicated.' You can never restrict the director from doing anything, so you have to imagine ways of making it work.

"On some of my earlier French films, such as Therese, I started moving the lights as the actors moved. On this film, I frequently used Chinese lanterns attached to boom arms. I also put all of my lamps on dimmer consoles so I would be able to adjust them to the various situations. Of course, we were using some supplemental lighting for the candlelight scenes. I used the Chinese lanterns in conjunction with other supplemental sources. Most of the time, I placed the lanterns on booms and tracked the characters as they moved around. But I also put the paper lanterns in different places on the set. I positioned as many as I could, basically where the light sources were. Then I would sit at the dimmer console and play with the controls until I found a satisfying combination of lights. I often came up with separate schemes that would change throughout a single sequence. One would be

for the beginning of the scene, one would be for ten seconds later, and so on. I always had several different programs ready, because sometimes the light I used for the beginning of a shot would bother me at the end. By working this way, I could make adjustments; if the camera is moving and the actors are moving, there's no reason to keep the lighting static if you don't need to."

Rousselot stresses that his photographic approach to material never conforms to a neat, preplanned recipe. His approach on most films incorporates both careful planning and on-the-spot inspiration, but his lack of prep time on Interview necessitated more of the latter than the former. Given this situation, he let his filmic instincts serve as his guide. "Whatever you do when you light or photograph a film is the result of a complex combination of various factors; the overall approach is hardly ever something you can put down on paper or into words. The visuals involve a blend of the

actors, the sets, the lighting, and so forth. On an exterior, you have to deal with the daylight that you're given and the time at which the shot is executed. My job involves all kinds of considerations. Once you get to the set or location, you feel things out and respond to the conditions at hand. It's not strictly an accumulation of theories and concepts; it's more subtle than just cerebral calculation."

Elaborating on this point, Rousselot dissects a typical situation that he confronted on Interview: "Let's say you come onto the set and you've got three candles on a table. There is an element in those three candles. You switch off every light on the set and try to have a real source with the practicals alone. But then you realize that you can't see a bloody thing by the light of three candles! You might decide to go as close to reality as possible, or you might decide to play a much brighter mood. But you don't make that decision because it's a vampire movie; you make it because you feel that the scene would or wouldn't play in darkness. It's a decision that's not really based on the concept you planned out three months before. At all times, you have to keep in mind that you're telling a story and the audience needs to know what's going on."

This philosophy came into play during the staging of a key scene that occurs near the end of the film, when Louis wanders through an abandoned manor and stumbles across a decrepit, despondent Lestat, who remains hidden from view until a climactic point in the sequence. Prior to shooting the scene, Rousselot conferred with Tom Cruise, who was more than willing to forego the typical "actor's vanity" in service to the story. "Tom said to me, 'Let's play the scene in the dark; it doesn't even matter if you don't see my face.' It was a selfless idea, but he had done four hours of makeup beforehand, so that made me think, 'Well, maybe that's not such a good idea; otherwise, why should he go through all that trouble and preparation?' Also, it was quite a long and emotional scene. But I thought about it a moment, and said, 'Yes, it's a good idea that Lestat should be in the dark for part of the scene, but not for too long.' After awhile, I

wanted to show his face. The result was that we combined the two approaches, and it worked out quite well. In the first shot, you hardly see him; in the second shot, you get more of a glimpse; finally, at the high point of the scene, you get to see his face."

Rousselot used the film's darkness to his advantage in other scenes as well. After Claudia and Louis attempt to murder Lestat by slitting his throat and tossing him into an alligator-filled swamp, the resilient vampire makes an unexpected return and confronts the pair while knuckling out a ghoulish serenade at the piano. As his former friends look on with disbelief and dread, the grotesquely decomposed vampire, partially obscured by a transparent window curtain that billows over his features, springs at them with sudden fury. Rousselot describes the scene: "Louis and Claudia have been packing to leave New Orleans, so all of the furniture is covered with white muslin sheets; it looks almost like a ghost house. When Lestat appears at the piano, there's heavy makeup on his face. We decided to put a single practical oil lamp in the middle of the set. That lighting really fit the tone of the scene: there was this one light at the center of the room, and everything else just receded into darkness. I don't really know why, but the presence of this single light created the look we were after; it was quite frightening."

Rousselot photographed the film with Panaflex cameras and Primo lenses. His workhorse lenses were the 27mm, 75mm and 150mm, but he occasionally used 4:1 and 5:1 zooms, "mainly for convenience." He frequently employed the 150mm for close-ups, which gave the backgrounds a softness that pillowed the actors' heads. For wide angles, he used the 14mm and 17.5mm Primos. "We used some very wide lenses on a 19th-century Paris hotel room set, which was round," he notes. "It was funny to use a very

Claudia and Louis meet with Armand, the courtly, 400year-old leader of a Parisian vampire sect.





wide lens, which tends to distort a set, but we used it in very subtle ways. It looked O.K., because we were distorting curves instead of right angles. The room had a cupola that was painted gold, and I basically used the reflections of that gold paint. I also played around with my lamps and put vellow gels on sometimes. When you deal with oil lamps and candles, it's very difficult to be cold, so you have to stay in the warmer range. But I'm not crazy about using a lot of gels and changing the colors. If you have wonderful sets, why change the colors?"

In general, aside from some soft diffusion, Rousselot avoided the use of filtration. "I tried to put as few things as possible between my eyes and the things I was shooting," he says. "I wanted to light the sets in a way that wouldn't conflict with what they were about. If I've got a

warm set, I'm not going to try to light it blue! I don't believe that anything comes out of contradiction. Each set or situation carries a spirit that you have to go with. I usually don't use a lot of harsh light; I mainly use soft light. I always feel bad if I change that look with filters or smoke."

When lighting the film's present-day sequences, which serve to frame the tale's flashbacks, Rousselot decided to give the visuals a bit more edge. With more lights at his disposal, Rousselot jumped from his "period stop" of 2.8 to a "modern stop" of 4 or 4.5. "Because of the higher stop, the images in the present-day footage are a little bit crisper," he points out. "It's not an extreme difference, but it's noticeable; there's more depth of field and the look is slightly sharper. Also, the colors are a bit colder, and they add more separation to the look. In the period

scenes, the colors are much closer together."

Rousselot's refined approach to the material extended to the tale's much-publicized homoerotic undertones. In defiance of tabloid gossip and advance rumors, Interview, despite its sexy look and feel, is devoid of the sort of explicit eroticism that Rousselot says he abhors. "As far as the erotic aspects of the film are concerned, I tried to lend those scenes a more serious. brooding quality. I'm not crazy about shooting scenes that involve sex; most sex scenes in the cinema deal with pleasure and happiness, and they're ultimately boring! When I read a script and I come to the page where the characters make love, it's basically boring to me; the story stops. I prefer scenes with drama, scenes that move the narrative along.'

The most demanding as-

A wide-angle view of the "catacombs" beneath the Theatre des Vampires. Note the combination of Chinese lanterns, candles and other supplemental sources.

pect of the shoot, in both logistical and photographic terms, was the fact that so much of it took place at night. In addition to forcing the crew to work almost exclusively after sundown, this aspect of *Interview* required Rousselot to come up with an effective lighting scheme that would be realistic and still allow viewers to follow the action onscreen. "Because we were dealing with these bizarre creatures who live and see everything at night, I was constantly shooting situations in which people wouldn't have been able to see anything," he says. "The sets and the scenes at night were situations that, in the real world, would have been almost pitch dark. There was a balance, which was very difficult for me to find, between the reality of a completely black screen — which would not have made the producer very happy! — and something that was lit enough to tell the story without looking completely unreal and artificial."

This balance proved especially crucial while shooting the film's many night exteriors, which often involved extremely wide vistas. "We had to light absolutely enormous areas and create a night look that nobody has ever seen before," Rousselot submits. "When you're on exterior nights, and you don't have manmade sources of light, you basically only have the option of moonlight. That's the reality upon which you have to base your approach. When I'm confronted with such a situation, most of the time I try to re-create a kind of moonlight by shooting day-for-night or by lighting the entire area of the scene with one source light. That usually means using one big light and printing it cold blue to fake the moonlight. On this picture, there was no way we could do the whole thing dayfor-night, because day-for-night has certain limitations. We were mixing moonlight and fire and candles, so day-for-night was out of the question. I wasn't really

happy with the idea of using one big source light, because I didn't want to have too much cold, harsh backlight. Also, I could not have achieved it in most locations because they were much too wide for that kind of approach. What I tried to do was to create a look of 'moonlight on an overcast night,' as if the moon was shining through. It's like an overcast day, but very dark. I also tried to avoid always printing that footage blue; I tried to play it on the cyan side sometimes, and at other times I even printed it a bit warmer."

In equipment terms, this exterior approach translated into groups of approximately ten Space Lights attached to strategically positioned cranes. He points out that Space Lights, which emit a softer glow than Muscos, are usually hung from the ceilings of sound stages to provide large fields of grey, overcast light. "I did use Musco Lights, but not so much for the exteriors as for our big outside street set; that set was played much more realistically than the 'vampire vision' night scenes. A Musco Light is usually used as a backlight or sidelight when you want one big source."

Due to the width of the exteriors, Rousselot never opened his lens past 2.8 — unless the shot involved a big, tight close-up or another situation that would allow him to boost his light level. The cinematographer used 2.8 as a basic stop because the film involved many camera moves and complicated shots; a more wide-open stop would have made it extremely difficult to achieve the necessary focus for such scenes. "On the other hand," he adds, "if you go way past 2.8 the other way, all of the candles and practicals sort of die. The more lights you add, the weaker the candles will look in the end."

While Rousselot and Jordan considered shooting in anamorphic, the wider format was eventually rejected in favor of the standard 1.85 aspect ratio. "When I read the script, I wasn't convinced that we should shoot in

anamorphic," Rousselot says. "With so many nighttime scenes, you can't push your limits too far."

A typically hair-tearing setup was a shot in which hundreds of people are seen disembarking from a ship docked on the Mississippi River. "That was difficult because the shot involved a big camera move and lots of extras moving around. There was an enormous distance between the ship and the camera, which made it difficult to light the area. It was impossible to hide lamps, so everything had to be done from a distance. In that time period, they would have had oil lamps spread around, which for me means in the shot. We wanted to be true to what we were showing, but it was difficult to have plenty of practicals on the set when we were supplementing the lighting with big sources that were out of the frame. That was one of the biggest problems on the movie — to be able to makebelieve that certain scenes were lit by the practicals that were visible in the frame, especially during very wide angles."

To make matters worse, when shooting near the river, the production had to work around strict regulations designed to protect the Mississippi's banks. "All of the scenes which took place near the banks of the river, for which Dante built an entire street with brothels and houses, along a levee, were absolutely enormous," he testifies. "It was difficult to bring in cranes and things like that, because the levee is a very critical thing in Mississippi; it prevents the river from overflowing! We were not allowed to have any vehicles at all there. I had all of the lamps spread out over a half-mile, and everything was on dimmers, which necessitated a lot of cables and complicated rigging. It was raining, and we had horses galloping around and kicking out the cables. We were constantly running around and mending the lighting systems; dimmer sys-



An overhead view of the well in which Claudia and her vampire "mother" will soon meet their doom. Rousselot used a 14mm lens to make the well set look larger.

tems are not really meant to work in those conditions. We had a lot of small breakdowns which were very irritating, because they caused delays. I still have this vision of my gaffer being on the verge of a nervous collapse all the time because it was so complicated."

The street set caused Rousselot grief on more than one occasion. During one of the first weeks of shooting, he confronted a Louma Crane shot that was particularly difficult to light. "After I lit it I still wasn't happy," he says. "When I went to dailies, I thought it was horrible, basically because about 70 or 80 percent of the shot was to be composited digitally with other things. It was a situation where we were missing 80 percent of the elements, and what we got was just this kind of muddy, grey shot. I was on the verge of tears, but then I heard [visual effects supervisor] Rob Legato saying, 'That's fantastic, it's really nice.' I was stunned, but when I saw the completed shot six months later it looked

really great."

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Rousselot reserves special praise for Legato, whose work is detailed in this issue's companion piece on the film's special effects. The cinematographer had never before worked on such an effects-laden film, and he credits Legato for the smooth integration of the film's fantastic elements. "In a way, it was very easy for me to work with the effects, because Rob understood very well what was going on, and he was very reassuring," Rousselot says. "The effects work is seamless. There's one sequence in particular where you can see this — a close-up with a camera move done via motion control. The camera is on little Claudia as she transforms into a vampire. Such scenes are very time-consuming, because of the details involving the makeup and the motion control. I lit the scene with three of four of my Chinese lanterns, and then left the rest to Rob. I told him, 'O.K., whatever to want to change to achieve the effect, please do; I'll see you at dailies."

Legato also shot some second-unit footage and supervised the burning of the vampire theater, which was one of the many large sets constructed at England's Pinewood Studios. "We had more firemen on that set than electricians; we just checked our meters and let him do it," says Rousselot. "The same thing applied to the fire scenes that took place inside our plantation house set. When you have entire sets going up in flames, you just have to guess the stop at which you'll film the fire. Once the fire is going, the scene basically lights itself. I used a few extra lights on the fire sets, and once again they were set up on dimmers, but basically the fire does it all on its own. I shot the fire scenes at 4.5, but we were making small adjustments and changing the stop throughout those shots. You have three or four cameras working, and you yell for everybody to change their stops. You really have to do it by eye. What I did was to light the scenes before the fires according to the stop I thought I'd have once the fires were burning.

"The exterior view of the plantation house burning was actually shot with no flames at all," he notes. "It was a historic part of New Orleans, and we were not even allowed to strike a match! We shot that scene with fire effects in the lighting and some smoke, but Rob Legato added 'digital fire' later. When we saw the dailies, it looked pretty good even without the flames, but the shot was much more spectacular when the fire was added."

Once shooting had been completed Stateside, *Interview* took over nearly every stage at Pinewood (roughly six or seven), including the old "007" stage used on many of the James Bond films. In addition to the vampire theater, sets at the studio included the interiors of Louis' plantation house (exteriors were shot on location in New Orleans); a New Orleans apartment with several rooms; a New Orleans graveyard and swamp; the interiors of a Paris hotel and the modern-day apartment in San Francisco: a church interior: a Paris street; catacombs; the well in which Claudia meets her doom; and an array of other rooms.

Dimmers were used to great effect on several of the sets. The catacombs were lit with a combination of Space Lights on dimmers and Chinese lanterns; the graveyard set necessitated an entire ceiling of Space Lights, all controlled via console. "I could light up a row here and a row there," Rousselot recalls. "If you do a 180-degree move, your backlight becomes a key light; if I didn't want that, I could just switch off to something else. It was a very convenient system."

One particularly challenging set was an ornate interior filled with glass globes containing stuffed animals. The setting made for an effective mise-enscène, but the globes reflected every light source in the room. "We

had about 25 of these globes on the set, and they picked up everything," he says with a slight groan. "Also, all of the pictures in the room were in glass frames, which also caused reflections, and there were French doors in the background. We solved the problem by working with the gaffer to make metal rings upon which we attached very tiny 100watt quartz bulbs, which looked like chandeliers when they were reflected. We had 50 or 60 rigged in the shape of chandeliers, and it worked out quite nicely."

In any movie about vampires, of course, the cinematographer must eventually deal with the ultimate natural light source: the sun itself. Rousselot twice found himself attempting to improve upon Mother Nature for scenes in which Old Sol makes pivotal appearances.

The first, in which Louis watches his last sunrise before becoming a vampire, took place on Ferretti's Pinewood swamp set. The swamp set was particularly impressive, and solved a major logistical difficulty. "The swamp had to be lit in the 'overcast moonlight' style I described earlier," says Rousselot. "We tried to locate a good-looking swamp in Louisiana, and sent location scouts out in sea planes and choppers. But when the sun rises in the swamp, you can't really see the sun on the horizon, because it's blocked by miles and miles of trees. We left Louisiana without the scene, not really knowing how to achieve it. Then Dante built the swamp at Pinewood, and it looked really good. I said, 'O.K., let's shoot the sunrise here.' We added a bit of smoke and dry effects, and built a round cutout out of Perspex to simulate the sun. I put a 2K with gels behind it and rigged it on a dolly; on cue, the sun was brought over the horizon at the other end of the set! The advantage of this was that we could have a perfect-looking sun. Usually when you shoot sunrises or sunsets, the sun is disappointingly small. The result was a quality that was slightly unreal; our sunrise looks a bit like a Chinese painting, almost to the point of abstraction."

The second sun sequence provides one of the film's most horrific moments, as Claudia and her vampire mother, locked in a large stone well by members of the Paris vampire cult, are charred into ash when dawn arrives. The sun's blazing glare is made even more effective by the fact that nearly all of the film's preceding scenes take place in the dark. "We didn't plan it so that the film would be dark until that particular moment, but it worked out and made the scene even better," says Rousselot. "For that sequence, we overlit the sun; I overexposed it by three or four stops. To simulate the sun, we first tried a Xenon light, but that didn't work; the well set was built almost up to the studio catwalks, and we had only four or five feet of room above the big grate at the top. Instead, we rigged a mirror on above the top of the well, and placed lights at the other end of the stage, as far away as we could to make the ray parallel and strong. We first tried this approach with a 7K Xenon, but it didn't work because at that distance you could see a bit of flicker. We changed to a 20K tungsten, which worked much better."

The irony of creating an artificial sun was not lost on Rousselot and the crew, who had been laboring for weeks in a murky gloom usually reserved for moles, miners and yes, vampire bats. "We didn't see much daylight at all on this picture," he confirms with a sigh. "Even when we were on the stages, we were sort of locked in darkness. On a typical film, you usually shoot a fairly balanced percentage of day and night scenes. But on this film, absolutely everything was night. I'll admit, I was very happy to see the real sun again!"

## Digital Domain Arranges an *Interview With the Vampire*

Visual effects supervisor Rob Legato and cohorts create innovative effects to enhance film's air of decadence and dread.

#### by Ron Magid

The sanguinary saga of the evil vampire Lestat, his reluctant companion Louis and the child vampiress Claudia has at last made it to the big screen, in bloody high style. The cinema's last epic vampiric outing, Bram Stoker's Dracula, primarily used old-fashioned in-camera effects to create an unhealthy malaise. But the director of *Interview With* the Vampire, Neil Jordan, enlisted Stan Winston Studio, Digital Domain and visual effects supervisor Rob Legato to pioneer a cryptful of new effects techniques for Anne Rice's Southern Gothic reinvention of the myth of the undead.

Though Stan Winston, a co-owner of Digital Domain, was already creating the film's gruesome makeup effects, it fell to Legato to persuade Jordan, the uncompromising director of The Crying Game, that he and Digital Domain were right for the job. Legato had won Emmy Awards for his work on the series Star Trek: The Next Generation and Deep Space Nine, but had never helmed a feature. He was awarded the task of bringing Anne Rice's tale to the screen only after creating a series of tests that showed Jordan he could deliver the supernatural goods.

There was just one catch: Jordan and cinematographer Philippe Rousselot insisted that the first of the Vampire Chronicles depict the undead as realistically as possible. Fortunately, that strategy fit snugly with Legato's own plans, like a custom-built coffin lid. "Our hope was that no one would

know we'd done anything," says Legato. "We felt that we got more production value by throwing effects away, which was actually

very expensive, time-consuming and difficult to do. It's much easier to be bold with effects than to bury them."

The film's story is told in flashback by Louis, who relates vampiric odyssey to the Interviewer (Christian Slater, taking over the role initially assigned to River Phoenix before the latter's untimely death) in a contemporary San Francisco apartment. This setup, which serves as the film's

as the film's framing device, created the challenge of returning to the apartment in ever more interesting ways.

At one point, Jordan wanted to cinematically link the "interview" and "vampire" aspects of his film by

panning from Louis and Claudia in a boat to Louis and the Interviewer in the apartment. The real-time motion-control moves







on the two scenes were easily combined into a seamless pan, but adding the high-speed

Claudia and her newly-undead companion, Madeleine, are seared by the morning sun. The effect was achieved by tracking "digital makeup" onto the actresses' skin. The blisters were integrated with the actresses' movements to create a completely seamless illusion. In the bottom photo, Louis reaches out to touch the pair's charred, ashen remains.

photography of the miniature Pompeii waterfront behind the boat made the shot extremely problematic — that is, until Legato made a tremendous breakthrough while scouting locations: "I just happened on a much easier way to shoot backgrounds locked off, then blend them seamlessly into moving shots. I took several pictures of a walkway location, then scanned those individual photo 'tiles' into a computer and blended out the seams in Photoshop. Without realizing it, I'd actually rebuilt the location in the computer! As I scrolled back and forth across the image, it looked identical to a pan we'd do at the location, except that I was using a computer camera. I realized I could do the same thing with the miniature Pompeii waterfront background for the boat scene. I didn't need to shoot it motion control; I could just shoot the actors with something I could track, like an X on the wall behind them, then lay that move over my tiled background and match the pieces together."

The process, which Legato calls Pan-and-Tile, is similar to creating a virtual-reality environment. Says Legato, "A virtual-reality room is constructed by shooting every possibility, after which the computer shuffles frames so the perspective matches as you move your head." It's also the first crucial step in allowing filmmakers to combine actors and CG sets without using motion-control cameras.

After marrying the motion-control pans on Louis and Claudia in the boat and Louis and the Interviewer in the apartment, Legato used the Pan-and-Tile technique to translate that "continuous" move to the miniature background behind the boat. The huge Pompeii waterfront miniature was shot at Pinewood Studios during magic hour at 120 frames per second to scale the water. The miniature shot was augmented by another nighttime pass, shot at 1 fps using a 10K to

create edge-light and depth, and then rounded out by a matte painting of Mount Vesuvius smoking in the distance.

Legato was attempting something that had never been done before, but found that the technique was easier than he imagined: "I tile-photographed every part of the miniature, seamed it together and then worked on the camera move in the computer so it appeared to travel with Louis and Claudia in the boat past the model. We also created boat motion by using a pendulum wired to a computer aboard-ship; when we added that to the shot, the boat appeared to rise and fall independently. After the camera pauses to glance at several pages of Claudia's sketches, which detail the rest of the journey, we go back to the apartment and realize that the voice-over is really Louis talking to the Interviewer. I was able to do that because the computer tracks things extremely well, but it was still one of the more complicated shots."

Tracking software also played an extremely important role in a scene in which Lestat (Tom Cruise) is set on fire. Jordan asked Digital Domain to blend fire, water and other natural phenomena into the effects mix; the flames of many of the film's "hotter" shots were fanned by digital compositing artist Michael Kanfer. Gary Jackemuk had already "burned down" New Orleans' famous Oak Alley plantation by tracking fire from Stetson Visual Services' exact miniature recreation onto the real building; Mike Kanfer had also extended a blazing street set by tracking Kevin Mack's matte painting behind the on-stage smoke and fiery balconies. But that was child's play compared to Jordan's next order: a shot of a kerosene lamp exploding at Lestat's feet, showing the flames wrapping around his legs, torso and arms without masking the vampire's malicious features.

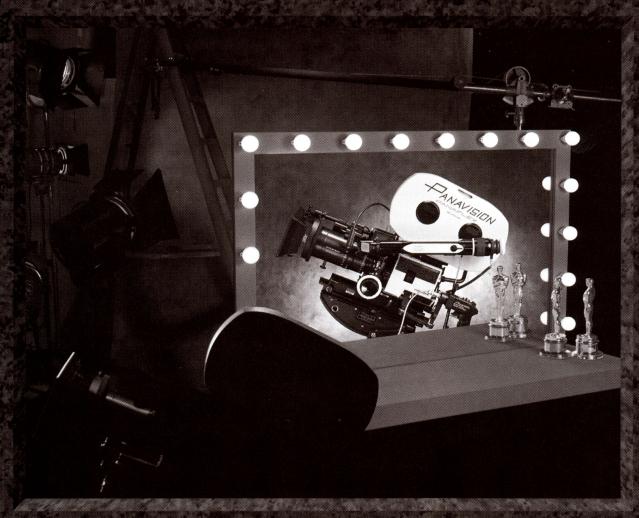
Digital Domain couldn't

very well set Tom Cruise on fire, though at the time, that option seemed to be the only way to get the shot Jordan wanted. "We set a puddle of combustible material on fire against black," Kanfer recalls, "then mapped it into the background plate with the shattered lantern and Tom Cruise, so the kerosene appears to spread across the floor as the result of the lantern exploding."

In Rousselot's original background plate, the camera tilts up from the smashed lantern, following the "flames" wrapping around Lestat's flailing form. "Neil instructed Tom to react to the lantern bursting on the floor, then act as if he'd caught fire," Kanfer says. "We had to make it look believable. Originally, we were going to build this incredibly complex robot, then roto Cruise's movements in Softimage and use that data to control all the motors. But fire has to be shot in real time and this robot could never move fast enough. Ultimately, we decided to shoot static individual body parts on fire against black. We wrapped a dummy's legs, thighs, chest and head in duvatene and Ioe Viskocil lit them on fire. The one twist was the arms: since they were the fastest-moving parts of his body, we built a simpler robotic device that we keyframed, using the camera tap and switcher, to move exactly the way Tom's arms moved, then lit it on fire. The element wasn't in perfect sync, but after we adjusted it digitally, it worked fine."

"We exploded the individual elements at different points," Legato interjects. "First the lower legs went off, then the upper legs, then the chest and then the arms. They were all shot locked-off, so when we tracked these static elements over Tom's moving body, we just backtimed them exactly; when we tilted up, it appeared as if we were panning up with the flames as they raced over his body."

Again using special tracking software, Kanfer plotted



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the tilt-up camera move to the burning elements, then composited them over Cruise's body so the shot traveled with the flames as they enveloped Lestat. "I had to do a very tedious paintthrough operation to seam all the different flaming joints together on a frame-by-frame basis," Kanfer says. "Over that, we used warping software to remove any positioning error and adjust the flames to Tom's clothing. The resulting element was a seamless figure of fire against black that fit perfectly when it was composited over his body."

The final obstacle was blending the fiery conflagration believably into Philippe Rousselot's very darkly lit set. The cinematographer consistently shied away from the clichés of blue light at night and golden light in the morning; the only warmth in his images came from authentic sources, such as candlelight and fire. Legato's obsessive determination to match the lighting of Digital Domain's effects shots to Rousselot's, unit for unit, made one of the film's most difficult shots nearly impossible. "The room Philippe shot was fairly dark and was lit mostly by the fire, which wasn't in the plate," Kanfer says. "He did some interactive lighting during the shoot, but it wasn't accurate because he didn't know the timings of the flames. Philippe wanted our effects shots back as negatives that matched as closely as possible to [his footage,] so I had to somehow open up this very dark room and modulate the light in it to reflect the flames. It was difficult."

Rousselot's style of photography (see accompanying article on the film's cinematography) involved shooting on Kodak 5296 and then printing down to create an austere, painterly look. Contrary to the conventional wisdom, the darker a shot is, the more sins it reveals when visual effects are added. Digital Domain employed its new Cinegrade software to exactly translate incom-

ing imagery into a duplicate digital negative. Still, the problem was exacerbated whenever Rousselot was shooting scenes dealing with the undead. "Many of the vampire plates lived in the toe, or the very low end, of the sensitometric curve of film response," Kanfer emphasizes. "Very subtle moves created great changes; the shadows of the scene could be just short of being dead black, without detail, but if the digital effects were moved up just a notch, the detail in the negative was suddenly revealed. Matching synthetic elements into film with such a limited density range is not like putting elements into normally exposed 5245 shot in daylight. All the things that make a good composite are accentuated even more if you work within narrow contrast ranges."

These considerations complicated one of the most difficult shots of the digital era. The first attempt by Louis and Claudia to destroy the undead Lestat was achieved via the virtually unprecedented combination of Stan Winston's ultimate mechanical makeup effects and Digital Domain's computer graphics. Winston's crew built a life-sized motion-control puppet of Tom Cruise that actually appeared to crawl across the floor. The puppet was mounted on a large metal platform which housed the computer and mechanics that animated the figure. The puppet was outfitted with four different heads and sets of hands, each of which were shot in separate passes against bluescreen while the animatronic went through its identical move. "Its blond wig was also shot as a separate matte pass, as was the blood pouring out of its neck wound, all using the same animatronic model," Legato confirms.

After that footage was scanned into the computer, the elements of the carpet Cruise crawls across, as well as the background (both of which were shot separately) were composited

with the puppet. Then Digital Domain morphed the puppet's features from one head and pair of hands to the next, four times in all, to seamlessly effect the transition from each of Cruise's incarnations. The astounding result: as the shot progresses, Cruise's cheekbones become more skeletal, his eyes more hollowed out and his hands bonier.

Ironically, by the time Interview With The Vampire's visual effects were being completed, advances in digital technology meant that an elaborate mechanical puppet was no longer the only way to achieve the transformation. To prove it, Legato used CG alone to crisp one of the undead in the climactic Theatre Des Vampires inferno. The original plate showed the flame-engulfed vampire, played by a stuntman wearing a protective mask over his face, hanging from a chunk of masonry in front of bluescreen. After the shot was scanned into the computer, Digital Domain went to work. "Kevin Mack and Mark Lasoff shot and mapped each section of the stuntman's face onto a flat surface, which looked as if it had been steamrollered," Legato says with a grin. "Then Mack used CG to paint various stages in which his face melted onto it. Each of those stages was texture-mapped on top of a three-dimensional Cyberscan of the stuntman's head, so his retouched skin was actually laid over his actual geometry, which then appeared to melt. Next, we matted the CG head with these morphing changes over the stuntman's real head, so this guy's head wasn't even his own! The result was very good; you even see his teeth as he's screaming. Lastly, we replaced the bluescreen background with a plate of the actual theater set exploding in flames. Had I known this was a viable way of doing these effects, we probably could have handled the Tom Cruise transformation differently."

What Legato so casually

refers to is digital makeup. As recently as last December, Scott Ross, the head of Digital Domain, predicted that such a technique wouldn't be possible for years to come. That feeling was probably shared by most of the behind-thescenes personnel at the start of production on Interview With the Vampire. But Legato felt differently—and had to in order to get the job. Legato wanted to create rapidly healing wounds for the vampires that would defy reality in conception and execution.

Before
Neil Jordan
awarded Interview With
the Vampire to
Digital Domain, Legato
did a test of a
shot that
wouldn't appear in the film
Lestat's
hand being

blown apart by a gunshot, and then healing. The effect was accomplished using a synthesis of computer graphics and conventional makeup effects. "There were questions about whether digital makeup would work," Legato admits. "I just had to somehow make it work. I opted to try to shoot the hand clean and shoot the wound separately against bluescreen and have blood drip out and the flesh blow out. The test was shot on film and composited on tape using the Harry paintbox. Adam Howard of Digital Magic tracked the healing wound well enough that Neil actually bought the effect." After seeing those tests, Jordan awarded the project to Digital Domain, and the die was cast: Interview With the Vampire would be one of the seminal effects films of the digital era.

The toughest part of doing digital makeup is tracking the effect to an actor's face or limb—the slightest flaw in registration would cause the effect to "float" on the skin's surface rather than appear married to the flesh. At



The conflagration at the plantation house was created by adding digital flames (top photo) to principal footage (bottom), which involved simple smoke and lighting effects.



the time, Digital's Domain ace compositer, Adam Stark, had to manually track the "healing effect" to Cruise's hand because computer tracking just wasn't sophisticated enough to matchmove the effect without motion control.

All of that soon changed. Legato saw the future, and it was called auto-tracking. Auto-tracking works a lot like colorization (whereby the computer is told to map certain colors onto specific objects over a number of frames). The technology has existed for the past decade, but it wasn't until recently that effects artists modified it for their specific purposes. "It's part manual and part computer," Legato says. "You tell the computer that you want to track this object by putting a box around it, and the computer compares the pixels in every frame to the one after it, then moves that box over for the next frame until the objects align. There are always a few mistakes, so we have to tweak things by hand, but it does most things perfectly. We still need reference points on the location to match, but it's very

"So we can now do 3-D mapping, based on what we jokingly call the Tennis Ball Theory. To put a tennis ball into a plate, the computer measures how far it would be from other objects in the scene, then figures out where the camera would have to be in 3-D space to photograph the ball in that position. By updating that position for every frame, the auto-track creates a moving computer camera. We can then take that data to a motion-control stage and match the move on a tennis ball, which means we can do very complicated motion-control shots without using motion control."

The advent of auto-tracking enabled Legato to spearhead Interview With the Vampire's digital makeup effects techniques. "It's our auto-tracking device that makes that stuff so sensational," Legato crows. "Otherwise, we'd be doing it by hand, like rotoscoping. And the results are amazing. We stabbed our main actor in the back and slashed his face — no one can believe they'd let us do those things to Tom Cruise!"

But "they" did let them, and in extreme close-up, no less. Claudia, understandably upset with Lestat for turning her into a vampire eternally trapped within a child's body, slashes his cheeks with a pair of scissors. Quicker than you can say "undead facelift," Lestat's wounds bleed

A vampire meets a fiery end. Digital Domain created this image by scanning footage of a stuntman into a computer, then using CG to add grotesque touches.

and heal while the bloody scabs flake away. Initially, Legato attempted to synthesize the entire effect in the computer, but it never looked completely real. After several weeks of experimentation, he realized he didn't have to do the entire effect using CG, but could do half of the effect in-camera: "There's a camp of CG people and a camp of traditional people, but I think a blend of the two philosophies is best. To synthesize blood dripping from the cuts took six weeks and nearly blew our budget, until I realized I could shoot the blood live on a stage in 20 minutes. Rather than killing ourselves trying to create the geometry of a blood drip in CG, which was like the tail wagging the dog, we could map the blood in using the computer, which did the trick spectacularly well. We blended the two techniques and got something that worked."

To begin with, Legato shot a blue lifecast of Tom Cruise's head against bluescreen. Blood was pumped out of a pipe drilled into the cast via hypodermic needle. Periodically, he had Stan Winston's crew add cuts to the lifecast using prosthetics. "The wounds were shot on-stage against bluescreen as long slivers, and I did take after take until the blood dribbled out the way I wanted it. Then we mapped the wounds onto Tom's face, which took three days rather than six weeks. Afterwards, Dennis Blakey squeezed and morphed them in the computer. The mix between the two is the magic."

The unenviable task of tracking the CG makeup onto Cruise's features in extreme close-up fell to digital compositing artist Michael Kanfer, who quickly learned that the less something moves, the harder it is to track: "Tom's face will be 30 feet high on the screen, so if there's one micron of positioning error, that wound will look as if it's floating all over the place. Not only that, Tom recoils and opens his mouth, so his facial muscles

were pulling all over the place. After lots of trial and error, I finally warped and played with the wounds so they not only tracked to Cruise's face, but also had the correct bends and folds. Tracking that effect was tough







because we didn't shoot any witness points, which are like little dots, to track Tom's movements. I created a high-contrast black & white version of Tom's face to accentuate certain features, such as his veins, which became my targets for our tracking and image-processing software. The blood was relatively easy to track since it actually dripped down Cruise's lifecast and followed the contours of his face."

Once the CG makeup

was firmly anchored to Cruise's features, the cuts had to open up, then heal almost instantaneously. "The wound healing was a combination of Dennis Blakey's morphing effect and my reveal mattes," Kanfer says.

"As Dennis morphed the wound splitting open, then healing, I wiped in my reveal mattes to either uncover or cover the different stages of the wound painted on the bluescreen lifecast. We also painted over and morphed the effect so it blended into Tom's skin. As the cuts morphed closed, Dennis animated the blood coagulating by making the drips thicken and pull together."

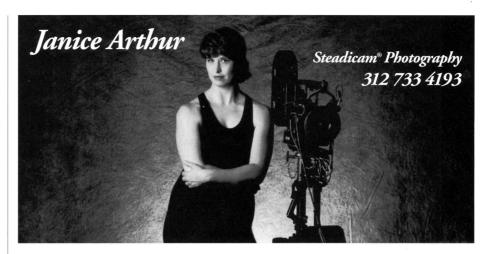
For someone who does not consider himself an animator, Kanfer did a great deal of animation on Cruise's wounds. But

when Legato asked him to make the cut scab over, then flake away, Kanfer ingeniously played to his strengths as a compositor: "On-stage, I shot several takes of tiny pieces of garlic husk, which have a white flaky texture, falling in front of black velvet. I did match edits on the frames in which the scabs were going to fall off, then rotoscoped the blood out and replaced it with the first frame of falling garlic husk. Rather than trying to animate the

light floaty nature of dried blood flakes, I just shot it. Lastly, I colorcorrected the flakes to the reddish color of dried blood."

Another remarkable effect, the fiery destruction of Claudia and her newly-undead companion, Madeleine, was also achieved by tracking digital makeup onto the actresses' skin. The vampire femmes are mercilessly thrown into a deep stone well within the Theatre des Vampires; at dawn, the sun's rays flare through the overhead grate, burning their flesh. As Madeleine shields her face from the lethal rays, her forearm, elbow and shoulder redden and blister. Claudia presses herself against Madeleine as smoke rises from the sizzling flesh of her hands and arms and wounds form on her body. None of these effects were present in the plate. "The live plates were shot with no makeup," insists digital compositor Adam Stark. "Kevin Mack painted some wounds roughly over the raw plates, then I used certain keying techniques to create the look Rob wanted in terms of the wounds' densities and falloff of color. Rob shot steam elements on the stage, which I was able to track and shape to their arms and shoulders, and digitally time to move at the speed we wanted. We didn't want the wounds to come on as a patch, but to come on based on density, so they had to be perfectly timed. I tracked several points on the subjects so the wounds would scale and rotate with their movements.'

"Adam did a great job blending it all in and tracking it, which allows you to buy that the burns are appearing on their skin," Legato says proudly. "The fact that these girls are moving and twisting as their flesh steams and blisters makes you believe that these digital makeups are real because they're integrated with their subtlest movements. We made pretty remarkable strides. Until this movie, I didn't know these things were pos-





sible."

The terrifying aftermath of Claudia and Madeleine's trial by solar fire is revealed when Louis discovers their charred bodies. As he touches them in horrified disbelief, they crumble away into ash. "We started with Stan Winston's effects bodies, which partially crumbled onset," Legato explains. "We couldn't make those bodies physically crumble to dust before your eyes; the best we could do was make them fall away in chunks. The bodies were cut into various pieces, and we had them on pull-wires so that when Brad touched them, it caused a chain reaction. We used motion control to trip the gross portion so we could fine-tune the effect; if we had done it live, we'd never have been able to control it. Still, it was a crude mechanical effect until we computer-animated falling particles of skin revealing gray ash as Brad touched the bodies. The final effect was partly liveaction and partly CG.'

Interview With The Vampire's digital pyrotechnics tend to obscure the remarkable, mostly traditional work Legato and Adam Stark used to achieve one of the film's most arresting images: a breathtaking corkscrew camera move rising up through the burnt wood and scorched stone of the once-imposing Theatre Des Vampires. Throughout the shot, Legato's lighting matched the misty gray look established by Rousselot's principal photography. "Someone asked why I didn't pour orange light through the miniature's windows to make it a jazzy shot," Legato says, shaking his head. "Although that would have looked really cool, the clichéd 'beautiful shot' with all the golden shafts wouldn't fit in psychologically. We steered away from that pristine look so you won't think it's an effect. We smoked the miniature, and then I lit it using a 10K outside the windows as if it were a real interior. It looks as if Neil and Philippe

shot it, not us."

The unlikely "miniature," which measured 30 feet square, was constructed by the ace modelmakers at Mark Stetson Visual Services and precisely matched the full-scale sets built on three separate stages at Pinewood. The vast model was shot on its side, because of the length of the move, via a snorkel camera on a special rig fitted with a custom 25-foot arm constructed at Digital Domain. The complex corkscrew move, shot at one frame per second, backed out of the catacombs past the shriveled husks of vampires (actually the model's back wall) and through the hole in the theater's floor, sailing majestically by the stained glass windows to the burnt roof. Problems arose immediately as the snorkel camera ascended out of the catacombs, where there was very little room to light.

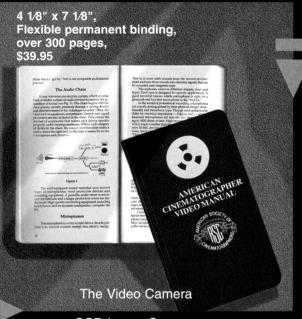
"Realistically, the catacombs had to be toplit, but the crane was in the way. When I increased the light from 'above' to get enough exposure, that created another problem: as the camera pulled back toward the roof, the shot became overexposed. I put the light on a motion-control dimmer, then lost another stop-and-a-half as the camera backed out of the hole, which duplicated the auto-irising our eyes do naturally when we go from inside to outside."

The snorkel camera also couldn't back out of the model without crushing the roof, so Legato had it hinged. Once the rig cleared, the roof slid back into place. The model's shattered ceiling was shot against blue screen, which was to be replaced by a matte painting of the Paris skyline at dawn. When the snorkel camera reached the rooftop, it was actually shooting straight down the barrel of the 10K that lit the whole model. This created a hazy light that nearly burned out the blue-screen background and lens flare that parallaxed as the camera boomed up. Legato and digital compositor Adam Stark were eager to retain these effects in the finished composite.

"It was a very difficult keying situation," Stark says. "The whole roof area was blown out: there was no detail whatsoever. After we scanned the film into the computer, I was able to digitally extract detail from the negative and cross-dissolve it in seamlessly. Next, I extracted the lens flare and the blue-screen area using the blue-screen pass; then I 2-D tracked the matte painting on a computer and laid the lens flare back over it. Lastly, I put different densities of light over the buildings to get the exact look we wanted." Stark also added scale and rotation to smoke elements and burning embers — actually backlit flour on plexiglass lit with red gels which provided the final touches of realism to the shot.

This realism, which enhances the entire film, is a source of great pride and worry to many of Digital Domain's effects artists, who wonder if audiences and Academy members will even recognize all the work that went into Interview With the Vampire. Because none of the effects look like effects, those shots don't stand out from the film's beautifully styled look. One thing is certain: the alliance of director Neil Jordan, cinematographer Philippe Rousselot, production designer Dante Ferretti and visual effects supervisor Rob Legato is the harbinger of a trend in film production, especially as more and more of each film is created digitally. "It was great to be treated like collaborators with Neil, Philippe, Dante and editor Mick Audsley, instead of being separate," Legato says. "We had a lot to live up to: these people are just fantastic artists, so we didn't want to let anybody down by making a different film from our end. We walked a fine line, but that was our goal. It inspired us to do our best.'

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## Eat Drink Man Woman: A Feast for the Eyes

#### Food is the central motif in film about Taiwanese family.

#### by Brooke Comer

"I'd always wanted to make a film about food," says director Ang Lee. "I wanted to make people salivate." Lee's previous project, The Wedding Banquet, featured fine dining, but did not sate his appetite for a full-blown food movie. Wedding Banquet did make Hollywood sit up and smell the wontons; the Academy Award nominee for Best Foreign Language Film cost only \$1 million to make and grossed \$23.6 million worldwide. The film's success allowed Lee to get more onscreen in Eat Drink despite a prix-fixe budget.

The story begins, and for the most part remains, in the Chu family kitchen. Tao Chu, Taiwan's greatest living chef, is in trouble. Food is his life, and he is losing his once-keen sense of taste. The three daughters he raised alone are now adults, still rebellious and still living at home. Culinary arts are in decline in Taiwan. Chu is depressed. He finds only temporary solace in his kitchen, preparing intricate gourmet dishes for his daughters.

Jia-Jen, the eldest, fears she'll be an old maid. Her passions are her work and her faith in Jesus Christ. Jia-Ning, the youngest, takes solace to extremes when she comforts her best friend's heartbroken boyfriend. Jia-Chien, an ambitious airline executive, is the only daughter who enjoys both cooking and an active sex life. "I started thinking about families and how they communicate," says the director. "Sometimes the things children need to hear most are the things parents find hardest to say, and vice versa. When that happens, we resort to ritual."

At this point in their lives, Chu family communications have been reduced to a Sunday night dinner. "Father Chu only knows how to satisfy one of their basic needs — food," says Lee. "He prepares the most elaborate complex meals, yet his daughters are hardly able to eat the food, the one thing their father can give them." Throughout the film, food serves as a metaphor for love.

"Photographing food is very time-consuming," Lee being prepared. You have to show the entire cooking process. In a film, you can't smell or taste the food. All you can do is see it. So how you see it becomes crucial. You're using food to seduce the senses."

Three world-class chefs worked on the production, in-

Cinematographer
Jong Lin and
assistant Susan
Vivtanen prepare to
shoot a panoramic
view of a reception
hall for The
Wedding Banquet.

cluding food consultant Lin Huei-Yi, daughter-inlaw of China's leading food expert, Pei-Mei. Huei-Yi coached the actors on physical preparation of dishes, and special choreography was devised to mimic traditional chefs' movements.

Up to a dozen dishes had to be prepared, steaming and shiny, for an eight-second shot. "It would probably take two hours to film a peanut butter and jelly sandwich if the

peanut butter had to be steaming," Lee muses. "Imagine filming Chi-Ling Fish, Steamed Deer in a Pumpkin Pot or Lotus Flower Soup."

A scene in which Jia-Chen slices tofu to make dump-



points out. "My idea was to create shots that were so suggestive, people would salivate — and it wasn't easy. You can't just present beautiful food to tantalize an audience. You have to gear up the audience; you have to show it



Left: The Chu family enjoys a typically elaborate meal. Below: Scenes involving food necessitated the participation of several experts to ensure that the various dishes would retain their appeal throughout filming.

lings for her boyfriend required six hours of shooting. For a scene in which she makes Chinese pancakes, there were two chefs making pancakes with three assistants. "A male chef would throw the dough on the griddle," recalls Lee, "but it wasn't possible for him to double his hand for Jia-Chien's, so a woman chef, a pancake expert, had to be on the set." In that scene, the pancakes are just a small part of a 10-course meal. Five backup dishes were prepared for every dish that was to appear on camera.

Lee's experience with food preparation precedes his career in film. Born in Taiwan, he came to America to study film. His primary exposure to cinema as a child was Hollywood movies and Taiwanese melodramas. "I was a movie freak when I was a child," he recalls. "I liked screwball comedy, I liked Billy Wilder, Italian neorealism, early Fellini, De Sica and Bergman."

Lee earned an MFA from New York University and won Best Director and Best Film at the New York University Film Festival. He was packing to return to Taiwan when he got a call from an agent who'd seen his work and urged him to stay. "I spent six years writing scripts, pitching, and learning the basic screenplay structure, which they didn't teach me in school." While honing his filmmaking skills, Lee did all the



cooking while his wife worked. "From a production standpoint," says the director, "food is the most difficult talent I've ever worked with."

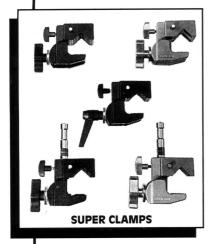
Around the time Lee was looking for a producer for his film *Pushing Hands*, a new pro-

duction company called Good Machine was looking for filmmakers with promising short films who had not yet made a feature. The co-principals, James Schamus and Ted Hope, liked Ang Lee's work and planned to contact the filmmaker about working with them. But he beat them to it, calling them first. Today, Good Machine is renowned as a leading production company in the independent scene. "No money was our strength at first," Schamus reflects. "We kept the company going by living off fees from co-productions and service deals. We made a conscious decision to avoid commercials and music videos. We chose our projects carefully."

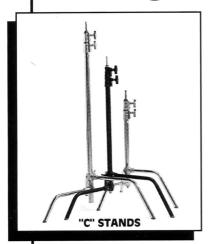
The relationship between Good Machine and Lee remains solid. "With almost every filmmaker we work with," says Schamus, "we make a first feature with that person and stick with that person. The real reason is that in the low-budget world, the writer-director is the key figure in terms of marketing." He adds that cinematographers often

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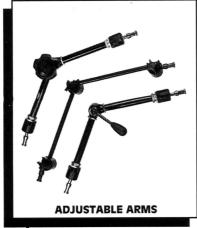
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565 E. Crescent Ave., Ramsey, NJ 07446 Phone: (201) 236-0077; FAX: (201) 818-9177 stick closely with one director too. "Both parties often increase their skills in the course of their collaboration."

Schamus, neither a director nor a cinematographer, has increased his collaboration skills, having written both Wedding Banquet and Eat Drink Man Woman with Lee and Hui-Ling Wang. Lee calls Schamus "one of the best script doctors in the world." Lee also had experience in common with his cinematographer. Jong Lin shot the director's previous films Wedding Banquet and Pushing Hands, as well as projects for other directors including Shadows of A Dream, a finalist in the Tokyo Film Festival.

Lee smiles as he describes meeting Lin at NYU. "Jong didn't want to have anything to do with film. He wanted to do anything else in the world. He came from a film family that talked about film morning, noon and night. He was fed up with film. He wanted no part of it."

Lin agrees. "I never thought, when I was studying at NYU, that I would end up being a cinematographer later on." Perhaps the shoes looked too big to fill. Lin's father was a top director of photography during the Chinese Golden era, the winner of four Golden Horse Awards (China's equivalent of the Academy Award), and is now the only cameraman in Taiwan to own a private film studio, Cine Kong, as well as a full-service rental house.

Lin's father also designed a mini Cinemascope zoom lens more than 20 years ago. "Back then," Lin explains, "some major brand zooms were too expensive, so my father made his own." For special effects films, Lin Sr. designed a home-made optical printer with a Mitchell movement.

From the age of 13, the younger Lin spent summers carrying batteries on his father's films. After studying French literature at Tamkang University in Taiwan, and doing a hitch in the army, Lin went to NYU film

school. "Even then, I didn't think cinematography would be a career, until I got so many offers from classmates to shoot their films." He admits that his strong technical background and early training were a boon. "I'm very fortunate," says Lin, "to have had steady work ever since."

"Jong has a strong sense of cinematography," Lee explains, "but he won't let light or a look take over a film. You'll never watch one of his films and say 'Wow, great cinematography,' and forget the story. He knows how to bring out characters." Lee usually goes over a script scene by scene with Lin, and tells him what kinds of mood and emotion he's after. "Then he's on his own. And most of the time, I agree with his decisions."

The two developed a shorthand means of communication sprinkled with film history references. "Occasionally if we'd take the camera up and intercut an angle, I'd say to Jong, 'Aha! A Bergman confession angle!' Or in the scene when the youngest Chu daughter is at work in a fast food restaurant, feeling guilty about taking away her best friend's boyfriend, we used toplight to get a certain shadow. We called it 'the Bergman guilty light.' We made up our own terms as we went along."

Lee's talent for storytelling keeps his emphasis entrenched in the characters, in propelling the story along, rather than making pretty pictures. "In many movies, from Hong Kong to Hollywood, there is a tendency for so-called good cinematography to take over the story. But I always focus on the story, and sometimes I'm not very fair to Jong," says Lee. "His camerawork is invisible. I want people to forget about cinematography. Of course, I want good quality cinematography. But working with me, Jong has less of a chance to win a Golden Horse award for best cinematography."

The filmmaking team was unable to screen dailies dur-

ing the shoot, and by the time production was completed, they'd only seen one third of the rushes. "Jong and I discussed it," says Lee. "We chose to send the film to DuArt, because it's such a good lab and we couldn't get that kind of quality in Taipei." The cost of having the developed film sent back was prohibitive. Instead, selected workprints were transferred to tape and sent back to Taiwan on cassette. Lee and Lin's dailies were limited to the material on the tapes, which arrived long after the scenes had been completed.

"We had to do a lot of guessing during production," Lee admits. "And it was hard, especially with the complications of the food. You really can't be sure until you see the rushes." Lee saved the food scenes for the last, "so I had absolutely no idea how they'd come out. I didn't see them until two months after we'd wrapped. Luckily, they looked fine." But he admits that if he'd had more of a budget, "I'd have had the rushes sent over."

For the food scenes in the Chu kitchen in the opening of the film, Lin used a heavy grid cloth to build a soft light box. "I used 5K HMIs through the grid cloth, and sometimes mixed in harsher light too, in case the color of the food tended to be darker," he explains. For scenes in the dining room, he also used the technique over the dining room table, this time using a Lowel light behind the grid.

A Panther dolly with a jib arm allowed Lin to move the camera through the kitchen during the whole shoot. "We tried to make it look like a star-tour," he explains. "I operated the Steadicam with an Arri-3 camera and a 9.8mm super-wide-angle lens. To create the chaos scenes like the one in the kitchen of the Grand Hotel and the fight scene at the Chu house — I used a handheld camera and covered with master shots from different angles. The handheld shots could be improvised, as long as they





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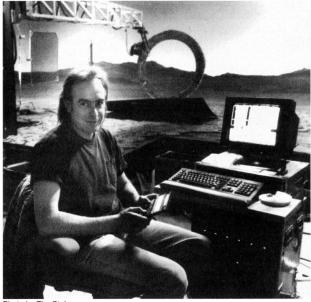


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Denecke, Inc. 5417 B Cahuenga Blvd N Hollywood, CA 91601 USA (818) 766-3525 or fax (818) 766-0269 didn't cross the line, because they could be cut together very well."

The most elegant location in the picture is undoubtedly the Grand Hotel, renowned as one of the most luxurious properties in the world, and featuring what is reputedly the biggest kitchen in Taiwan. The wedding banquet scene featured in the film was not contrived; Lee managed to film preparations for an actual banquet. "The production was lucky to have permission to shoot a wide shot as a transition shot, to get the chaos scene in that kitchen," Lin observes. "At night, the camera crew was asked to be very efficient and finish shooting in two hours." In order to meet this strict requirement, Lin used minimum lighting, and an Arri 3. "The banquet was a normal one for a wealthy Taiwanese family," Lin explains. "There must have been 120 tables, each one with 12 guests." He adds that the filmmakers were lucky enough to get some cameo shots, including closeups of Taiwan's Minister of Internal Affairs. "When the film opens in Taiwan," Lin observes, "the audience will crack up when they see him."

Real locations lent authenticity to Eat Drink. Most of the crucial scenes took place in the Chu family home, in particular the kitchen. Lee chose the ex-Mayor's house, a stately 50-yearold mansion built in the Japanese tradition. The fact that it was abandoned was a plus; it meant some cleaning up, but it also meant Lee could have the interior rebuilt. "I wanted a living room without walls for mise-en-scène, for an open feeling and so you could see people better." He had glass doors separate the big kitchen for depth, and he let the windows remain. "The big Japanese windows give good shadow depth to the images," according to Lee.

Two school scenes were mounted at real schools. The eldest Chu daughter is a high school teacher, and several scenes track her blossoming romance with a volleyball instructor. The school Lee chose was "very supportive," he remembers. "We were there for a week, and everyone was very excited to have a film crew around. We used students as extras." In another scene, Father Chu begins to prepare lunch for Shan-Shan, a neighbor's little girl, to take to school. Suddenly Shan-Shan's lunchbox is the envy of her classmates, and she begins to take requests from them, which she passes on to the chef. Lee used the actual school that Yu-Chien Tang, the child playing Shan-Shan, attends, and her real classmates played themselves. "We couldn't have done that in New York," Lee notes.

Shooting in Taiwan, according to the director, is different from shooting in America from bureaucratic as well as technical points of view. "There is a different work ethic in Taiwan," he notes. "In the States, a producer runs a production. The director asks what the producer wants. That's how artistic choices are made. In Taiwan, the director has more clout. Organization is less efficient, but there is more loyalty. You're not pushed as much in terms of time."

The role of the cinematographer is different in Taiwan as well. "The head gaffer deals with a lot of the lighting," Lee explains. "You tell the gaffer what kind of mood you want and he executes it. He stands next to the camera and works with the assistant. In Taiwan, gaffers have a lot of experience. It's not surprising to find a head gaffer who's been doing it for 40 years. You also find more experienced camera crews."

Production sound mixer Tom Paul had his own frustrations; in order to set up the microphones properly, he needed a lot of C-stands and flags to get rid of the boom shadows. But the crew could only use tape and black cardboard stuck on the ceiling or walls to eliminate shadow. While shooting a kitchen scene in which Jia-Chien cooks for her boyfriend, for example, Lee wanted the actress to walk back and forth, de-

spite the small space of the kitchen. "This was tough for Tom," observes Lin. "It required a lot of boom work, so gaffer Chin-Fou spent a lot of time rigging pieces of black cardboard on the ceiling to help Tom's boom. Then we started to roll the camera and film. But during the middle of the take, the cardboard pieces fell from the ceiling one by one. We all burst out laughing."

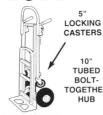
There were tense moments when a steaming dish had to be captured on film before it lost its perfect gloss, but Lee notes that generally speaking, "nothing went really wrong. In fact, the food shots came out especially well despite the conditions and our not being able to screen dailies."

Lee knew his film was a success when he made Michael Tong smack his lips. Tong, owner of New York's Shun Lee restaurant, added to his menu several entrees from the film (which includes cuisines from Shanghai, Hunan, Peking, and Beijing). Film fans can order Dragon Swimming on Yellow Sea (lobster and sliced kiwi, preparation time: six hours), or Beggar's Chicken (chicken cooked in clay) or Jade Shrimps Swimming in Jelly Lake (shrimp and steamed egg). "It's hard," says Tong, whose entrees have been photographed for numerous magazines, "to make food look good on camera. It has to be piping hot, under a sheen of glaze. After 10 minutes, that shine disappears and the food is visually uninteresting." He applauds Lee's efforts. "This film will make people hungry," he predicts.

One small problem arose when customs officials refused to let a cassette containing dailies material leave America, fearing the film was catering to a more prurient kind of appetite. "They thought it was a porno film because of the title," says Lee. "I was really mad then because they held the tape for a week. But now I laugh when I think about it."

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#### Behind The Mask of Fu Manchu

MGM serves up a fun-filled feast of depravity hosted by the megalomaniacal mandarin, memorably rendered by Boris Karloff.

#### by George E. Turner and Michael H. Price

Executives at MGM, the largest and richest of movie companies in the Thirties, generally shied away from "chillers." They preferred to put "more stars than there are in Heaven" into the more acceptable formats of drama, romance, musicals and comedy. On those rare occasions when they did veer into the macabre, however, they usually did it with a vengeance, piling the horror on more thickly than the less wealthy studios ever did and ignoring political correctness entirely. Thus we have *The Unknown*, *West of Zanzibar*, *Kongo*, *Freaks*, *Mad Love* and a few other harrowing and heavily criticized horror epics.

Such a curiosity is *The Mask of Fu Manchu*, which seems at surface to be a glossy action piece about the ridiculous, mysterious "Yellow Peril" that people used to worry about. A deeper look reveals

some decadent layers: mutual racial hatred, religious frenzy, opium addiction, nymphomania, sadomasochism, implied incest, torture, mutilation and dismemberment. It's almost as if a Rover Boys novel somehow became interleaved among the pages of a Krafft-Ebbing report.

The picture appalled the critics but delighted a large segment of the public and brought in respectable returns. However, it caused the studio a great deal of trouble and the costs were considerably more than had been anticipated.

The basis for the film was a novel of the same name by British author Sax Rohmer (Arthur Sarsfield Ward) which had been serialized in *Collier's Magazine* weekly from May 7 through July 23, 1932, and was due to be published in book form by Doubleday Doran in October. It was the fifth in



The evil Fu Manchu (Boris Karloff) hatches a plot from his throne.

a series of 13 books published from 1913 through 1959 featuring Dr. Fu Manchu, a warped genius who believed the world would be a better place if he were in sole charge. He had been portrayed on film by Harry Agar Lyons in 23 silent two-reelers made in England in 1923-24, and by Warner Oland in three memorable Paramount talking features — The Mysterious Dr. Fu Manchu, The Return of Fu *Manchu* and *Daughter of the Dragon* — in 1929-30-31. MGM at the time had a production/distribution agreement with Cosmopolitan Productions, the motion picture branch of the Hearst publishing empire. Intrigued by Boris Karloff's success in Frankenstein (1931), Cosmopolitan-MGM bought rights to the novel early in August and borrowed Universal's new horror star as he was finishing *The* 



Old Dark House and was on hold for The Mummy and The Invisible Man.

On August 6, 1932, principal photography of *Mask* was begun under supervision of Hunt Stromberg with Charles Vidor, a gifted but sometimes difficult Hungarian emigré, directing. Gaetano "Tony" Gaudio, ASC, one of the top men in his field, was the cinematographer. Supporting Karloff was a cast only MGM could have assembled: Myrna Loy as Fu Manchu's daughter, Fah Lo See; Lewis Stone as his archenemy, Sir Denis Nayland Smith; Gertrude Michael and Charles Starrett as the juvenile leads; and Lawrence Grant, Jean Hersholt and David Torrence as Smith's archeologist allies.

Almost simultaneously, *Rasputin and the Empress* began shooting at MGM with John, Lionel and Ethel Barrymore and a huge cast under the direction of Charles Brabin, a British-born veteran who began directing for Edison in 1914.

Both pictures had begun prematurely, with shaky screenplays and other unresolved problems. This was unusual at MGM, where the prevailing *modus operandi* was to have shooting scripts thoroughly polished before production commenced and to demand that directors "stick to the script."



Before the end of August, the studio halted production on both troubled pictures and directors Vidor and Brabin were fired. Soon after, Richard Boleslavski took over *Rasputin*, Vidor joined the ranks of the unemployed, and Brabin was assigned to *Mask*. All available staff writers were assigned to work on the two pictures, which insiders called *Disputin'* and *The Mess of Fu Manchu*.

After two weeks, a new story plan for *Mask* was agreed upon and a new script went into preparation that bore almost no similarity to the Rohmer book. Indecision reigned all through September. Rewrites and retakes were numerous. Karen Morley took over Gertrude Michaels' role and there were several minor casting changes. Gaudio remained with the picture. On October 9 the trade papers reported that both *Rasputin* and *Mask* were "still in the throes of story trouble, with no satisfactory ending yet written for either." *Mask* finally wrapped on October 21 with a negative cost of \$327,627.26.

The story that eventually reached the screen begins after Sir Nayland Smith (Lewis Stone), famed detective, realizes that archeologist Sir Lionel Barton (Lawrence Grant) has secretly learned the location of the tomb of Genghis Khan. He enlists the archeologist's aid to excavate the tomb before the master crime lord, Dr. Fu Manchu (Karloff) finds it. Should Dr. Fu obtain the mask and sword of Genghis Khan, he could declare himself the Khan returned to life and lead all of Asia against the rest of the world. Messrs. Smith and Barton meet secretly at the British Museum to recruit Von Borg (Jean Hersholt) and McLeod (David Torrence) for the expedition. Fu's agents, hidden in mummy cases, kidnap Sir Lionel. Sir Lionel's daughter, Sheila (Karen Morley), and her fiancé, Terrence Granville (Charles Starrett), learn of the kidnapping from Smith. They join the expedition to the edge of the Gobi Desert. Nearby, in an underground palace, Sir Lionel is brought before Fu Manchu, who offers him great wealth and the favors of Dr. Fu's beautiful daughter, Fah Lo See (Myrna Loy), if he will

Near left: A scene from the unfinished version of The Mask of Fu Manchu, with (left to right) David Torrence, Gertrude Michael, **Charles Starrett** and Jean Hersholt (Michael was later replaced by Karen Morley). Far left: "Would you all have maidens like this for your wives?" Karloff and Karen Morley.

Right: Nayland Smith (Lewis Stone) learns why Terrence Granville never returned to camp. Below right: Fu and his wicked daughter Fah Lo See (Myrna Loy) examine Kenneth Strickfaden's "death ray."



reveal the location of the tomb. When Sir Lionel refuses he is tied under a huge bell which rings incessantly. Dr. Fu brings tribal leaders to his palace and has his daughter tell them of the coming return of the Khan.

Meanwhile, Smith's expedition finds the tomb, which bears a 700-year-old inscription: "May the curse of the gods descend on him and his forever who dares enter herein." MacLeod, standing guard that night, is murdered. Later, Sir Lionel's severed hand drops from the trees. Goy Lo Sung (E. Allyn Warren) arrives with a message that Dr. Fu demands the mask and sword or further "evidence" will be forthcoming. Sheila and Terrence decide secretly to deliver the relics, per Dr. Fu's instructions, to the House of 10,000 Joys in the Street of the Dragon, Nankow. Taken before Fu Manchu, they are graciously received and assured that Sir Lionel is an honored guest. But when Dr. Fu tests the sword in an electric arc, it melts because Smith had secretly substituted a replica.

Fu's retribution is swift. Fah Lo See has Terrence lashed unmercifully, then makes love to the unconscious youth. The corpse of Sir Lionel is dumped at Smith's camp. Smith finds the tunnel to Dr. Fu's headquarters and is captured. Dr. Fu injects Terrence with a serum that, he explains, will make his body a mere extension of Fu Manchu's will. Terrence returns to camp during a raging storm and leads the others into a trap. Now Dr. Fu has the genuine sword and mask.

Under Sheila's influence, Terrence regains his mind and spurns Fah Lo See. But soon enough, our heroes are subjected to a variety of rather baroque tortures: Smith is placed on a slowly tilting board at the mercy of crocodiles, while Von Borg is put in "the room of the slim silver fingers," in which spiked walls close toward him. Terrence is again placed in the custody of Fah Lo See, Dr. Fu explains, "to await further injections of that interesting serum which, as you may have noticed, will make him her more-than-willing slave until, of course, she tires of him." Sheila is brought before the horde of chieftains Dr. Fu has gathered and they are told that her maiden blood will baptize the sacred sword.

In the nick of time, Smith escapes and frees Von Borg and Terry. From the laboratory above the banquet hall, Smith turns Dr. Fu's death ray onto the celebrants. Terrence seizes the sword, chops down Fu Manchu, and carries Sheila to safety. The picture ends after Smith, aboard a ship bound for England, flings the sword into the sea, saying, "Genghis Khan, wherever you are, I give you back vour sword."

The torture scenes were filmed with Stone in the spiked room and Hersholt in the crocodile pit, but Stromberg ordered retakes in which the plights of the characters were reversed. Originally, Terrence, upon escaping, strangled Fah Lo See when she tried to stab him. This was eliminated from the final cut because it was deemed that no rational audience would want to see Myrna Loy strangled. The delectable villainess, therefore, vanishes mysteriously with no explanation offered.

Director Brabin, in a press release, described the film as one with many unusual prob-





Director Charles Brabin (left) blocks out a scene with actors Jean Hersholt and **Charles Starrett** in the tomb of Genghis Khan.

lems. "We took mysteries of the Orient and blended them with ultra-modern science," he said. "The result was more things to find out than perhaps have ever occurred in a motion picture. For instance, the great Buddhas and other statues in the palace of Fu Manchu were copied from actual Oriental examples.

"Then we put in artificial lightning, Tesla coils, death-rays and other modern electrical wonders to show how the Oriental super-brain operated the strange laboratory in the chamber of the idols of his ancestors. Technicians copied almost everything in the British Museum, from mummies to pterodactyls. The picture is literally a course in archaeology, Oriental religion, history and modern

engineering rolled into one."

Karloff comes closer in appearance to being the definitive Fu Manchu than his predecessors, although the MGM concept of the character entirely omits the better side of his nature. In the stories, despite his cruelty, he is a man of honor who adamantly opposes war and always keeps his word; in the Oland films he is wholly admirable until he is driven insane by the destruction of his family during the Boxer Rebellion. Oland captured both aspects of the insidious one perfectly in his wellshaded performances, but the portly Swedish actor bore no physical resemblance to the tall, skeletal mandarin of Rohmer's imagination. Physically, Karloff is perfectly cast, appearing to be a foot taller than he really was (thanks to high block shoes and Gaudio's subtle camera angles) and depicting the evil side of Dr. Fu to the king's taste. The script permits nothing of pathos or understanding for him - a pity, for Karloff's greatest talent was in the sympathetic portrayal of menacing characters. He is superb within the parameters of the script, however.

Karloff is matched all the way by Myrna Loy's performance, which is equally bereft of sympathy. Her sadomasochistic scenes with Charles Starrett seem shocking even today. Her unusual kind of beauty lent itself well to Oriental characterizations, of which Mask was the last of many. Almost immediately after, she became a major star because of her delightful performances in sophisticated comedies and romantic dramas opposite the leading male stars of the time — William Powell, Clark Gable, Warner Baxter, etc.

Stern-visaged, authoritative Stone is the best of the screen's many Nayland Smiths, and the usually villainous Grant is the stoic Briton incarnate as the tragic Sir Lionel. Karen Morley, one of the most interesting and elegant young actresses of the

Near right:
Actor Lewis
Stone was
scheduled to be
placed in the
"room of the
slim silver
fingers," but...
Far right:...the
scene was
remade with
Jean Hersholt
and a different
pair of Nubian
slaves.



time, lends class to her role as the ingénue. The classically handsome Starrett, a former Dartmouth football star who in 1936 began a 17-year reign at Columbia as a popular Western star, does well as the romantic adventurer and provides a chilling moment in which, under the influence of a satanic drug, he laughs maniacally after delivering his colleagues into Fu Manchu's hands. Hersholt, Torrence and E. Allyn Warren (as a minion of Dr.

Fu) offer sturdy support.

Makeup artist Cecil Holland, in an article in American Cinematographer ("Orientals Made to Order," December 1932) said that in making up Karloff he filled in the area between eyelid and brow because Chinese eyes are set in the head differently than those of Europeans. To accomplish this, he applied thin layers of cotton saturated with collodion, shaped to fit, surfaced with nose putty and blended into the natural contours. He drew the eyebrows up and shaved off the ends to give "the Mephisto effect necessary for so malign a characterization." He distended Karloff's nose with plugs in the nostrils and built up the outside with nose putty. The ears were built up with putty and pointed slightly. Thin teeth caps, a coarse black wig with forelock, a long moustache, long fingernails and some specially formulated greasepaint completed the illusion. It took three hours of hard work each day, over the long schedule, to prepare Karloff for the cameras.

Myrna Loy was much easier, Holland said, because her round face and high cheekbones made her look more Oriental to begin with. Tapes under her wig drew her eyes and brows up into a slant and her lips were painted to appear fuller. "Such character makeup is certainly no game for amateurs," Holland remarked.

Tony Gaudio was a master of mood photography. A producer of a very successful picture once complained to this writer that his cinematographer "literally flooded our sets with light," adding, "We should have had Tony Gaudio, who does more with less light than anybody." Born in Italy in

1883, Gaudio was the son of a noted photographer and brother of cinematographer Eugene Gaudio, a founder of the ASC. He came to New York in 1906 and soon became studio manager and chief of cinematographers for Carl Laemmle. He had filmed around 70 features before he was assigned to *Mask*.

The picture is characterized by deep shadows and startling contrasts. Fu Manchu is introduced in a medium close-up in the flickering light of his laboratory, standing next to a reflector which grossly enlarges and distorts his face. The camera moves back to show him surrounded by bottles and silhouetted equipment, then pans to follow as he exits into a huge throne room. Thereafter Gaudio seized every opportunity to play shadows over the star's angular features and to light him from below.



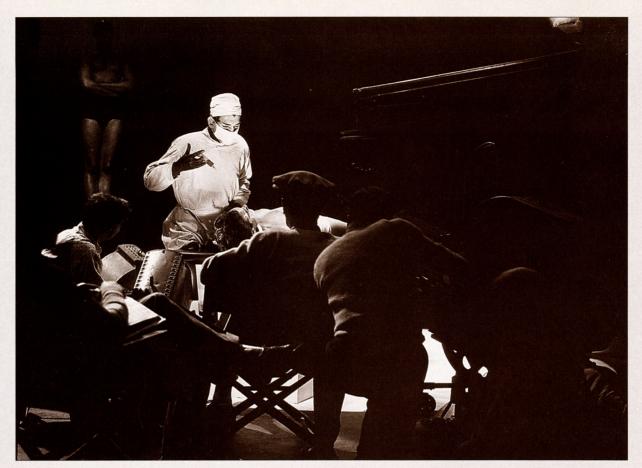
The same techniques were applied to Myrna Loy, but the very effects that make Dr. Fu more grotesque conversely enhance the glamour of his daughter.

Visually eloquent, the big sets of Dr. Fu's domain (augmented in some instances by Warren Newcombe's fine matte paintings) are filled with gigantic golden idols. The museum is replete with dinosaur skeletons, mummies, a pterodactyl and other impressive props, including a crocodile and the giant gorilla-like pit monster from *Tarzan*, the Ape Man. The elephant's graveyard set from *Tarzan* becomes an excavation site. The buried tomb features graceful golden idols and the enthroned, jewel-bedecked skeleton of the great Khan.

Fantastic pseudo-scientific electrical equipment was supplied by Kenneth Strickfaden, who had created the machinery of Fox's *Just Imagine* and Universal's *Frankenstein*. Strickfaden stood in for Karloff in the scenes in which Dr. Fu melts the fake scimitar in a huge electrical arc. He was almost killed in the process. The substitution is obvious because Strickfaden was a much smaller man with sharper features.

The costuming of the Manchus is spectacular. The biggest scenes are those of Dr. Fu's 48-hour banquet for his hundreds of chieftains, for which

Fu prepares to inject Starrett with "dragon's blood formula."



MGM made some 200 brocaded garments in addition to many rented from sources in the Chinatowns of Los Angeles and San Francisco. A museum loaned the costumes of the Samurai warriors who escort Loy to the feast, where the low tables are covered with exotic foods and the entertainments include a sword duel to the death.

Among the pre-Code delights is one of the most perversely erotic sequences this side of a stag show, in which the gorgeous and innocent-looking Fah Lo See orders the handsome Terrence flogged by two muscular black men. Myrna Loy's heretofore placid features become contorted with lust as she cries, "Aiee! Faster! Faster! Faster! Faster! Faster! Faster! Faster! Faster! of her scenes are missing in the videotape version.) While the youth lies unconscious, Fu's evil daughter, panting heavily, lasciviously fondles his half-naked, bleeding torso. When her father walks in as she is kissing the unconscious man, she says (coyly): "He is not entirely unhandsome, is he, my father?" "For a white man, no," is the reply.

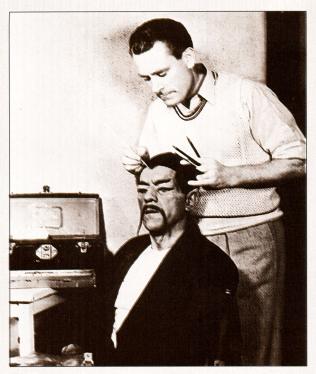
Racial slurs are hurled back and forth without restraint by both the Britishers and Dr. Fu. Nayland Smith starts the ball rolling with remarks about Fu Manchu's "wicked eyes" and "bony, cruel hands." The insults continue with Sir Lionel: "You're Fu Manchu, aren't you? "I'm a Doctor of Philosophy from Edinburgh, I'm a Doctor of Law

from Christ's College, I'm a Doctor of Medicine from Harvard. My friends, out of courtesy, call me Doctor." Fu replies, "Well, three-times doctor, what do you want from me?" When the offer of a million pounds to reveal the location of the tomb fails to sway Sir Lionel, Dr. Fu turns to Fah Lo See. "My daughter, explain to this gentleman the rewards that might be his. Point out to him the delights of our lovely country, the promise of our beautiful women. Even my daughter, even that, for you!" Sir Lionel's answer: "Fu Manchu, I'm not for sale!"

Later, Sir Lionel's daughter seizes an opportunity to face Dr. Fu with "You hideous yellow monster!" Sir Nayland gets in more nasty digs: "Is this a friend of your family?" he asks Dr. Fu as a snake slithers past.

The aristocratic Dr. Fu matches such insults with dignity. He calls Terrence a "son of a white dog" and warns Smith that "the slightest move will send a bullet crashing through your stiff British spine." When Smith demands the release of Terrence in the name of the British Government, Dr. Fu momentarily loses his cool: "British Government! I'll wipe them and the whole accursed white race off the face of the earth when I get the sword and mask that will call the teeming millions of Asia to the uprising. . ." Fu also promises Smith that he will "dispatch you to your cold, saintly Christian paradise," and tells his other guests that they "will

Makeup artist Cecil Holland prepares Karloff for the camera.



have the pleasure of entering. . . Christian heaven together. It will be your honor to be the first white martyrs to perish at the hands of the new Genghis Khan."

Introducing the blonde, diaphanously gowned Sheila to his hordes, Dr. Fu exults, "Would you all have maidens like this for your wives? Then conquer and breed! Kill the white man and take his women!" (Incidentally, the beautifully mastered video edition now available deletes many of the more insulting lines.)

The joy Fu Manchu derives from torturing his guests is exquisite. His description to Sir Lionel of what lies in store as the latter is strapped down under a huge bell is delivered with gloating pleasure. "You've read about this, Barton: the torture of the bell. It never stops. Minute after minute, hour after hour, day after day. Seems harmless, doesn't it? Just a bell ringing. But the percussion and repercussion of sound against your eardrums will soften and destroy them until the sound is magnified a thousand times. You can't move, you can't sleep, you will be frantic with thirst, you will be unspeakably foul, but here you will lie, day after day, until you tell." At a later visit Dr. Fu brings a bowl of food and drags a bunch of grapes across his stubborn guest's lips. "Aren't you hungry? Just nod your head and I'll feed you." Still later he has the bell stopped temporarily. "Rest and quiet! Now for a nice, long drink." He puts a goblet to Barton's lips, Barton chokes, Dr. Fu laughs. "Oh, I forgot to tell you — it was salt. . ." As a reward should Barton now decide to cooperate, Fu offers him no riches, women or a long life, just "fresh water, fresh food, a bath, sleep. Sleep, man, sleep! Day in, day out,

sleep!"

The mandarin describes to Sir Nayland the serum via which he will enslave Terrence: "The injection. . . will make his brain mine. In other words, he becomes a reflection of my will. He will do as I command exactly as though I were doing it." Later, with Terrence stripped to a diaper and strapped down in a strange surgical room, Dr. Fu has a struggling slave brought in and bitten by a snake, and watches him die. Drawing some of the slave's blood, he puts it into a mixture which he prepares to inject into Terrence's carotid artery. Pausing, he gently assures the youth that he will not be poisoned. "This serum, distilled from dragon blood, my own blood, the organs of different reptiles, and mixed with the magic brew of the seven sacred herbs, will only change you into the living instrument of my will. You will do as I command. You will think as I think, see as I see." That the same serum is used to make Terrence an enthusiastic lover for Fah Lo See adds an interesting touch of depravity to the proceedings.

The Hearst newspapers carried an eightpage, two-color tabloid supplement publicizing the feature. Included was a novelization written by the future maker of classic horror films, Val Lewton.

Dr. Fu Manchu didn't return to the screen until 1940, when Republic's serial, *The Drums of Fu Manchu*, with Henry Brandon offering a memorable performance, was released. A sequel was slated, but the State Department squelched the project after strong objections by the government of China. In later years the villian returned in a lackluster television series, several British-made features (disappointing despite color and a well-cast Christopher Lee), and a ghastly comedy version with Peter Sellers. None of these captured more than a little of the gloriously evil world Sax Rohmer envisioned so vividly.

#### Credits

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer presents a Cosmopolitan Production; produced by Hunt Stromberg; directed by Charles Brabin; screenplay by Irene Kuhn, Edgar Allan Woolf, John Willard; from the novel by Sax Rohmer; sound director, Douglas Shearer; art director, Cedric Gibbons; film editor, Ben Lewis; photographed by Tony Gaudio, ASC; gowns by Adrian; special effects, Warren Newcombe; musical score, Dr. William Axt; makeup artist, Cecil Holland; electrical properties, Kenneth Strickfaden; recording, Andrew MacDonald; assistant director, John Waters; set decorations, Edwin B. Willis; animal supervision, Jack Allman. Running time, 72 minutes. Released November 4, 1932.

Dr. Fu Manchu, Boris Karloff; Nayland Smith, Lewis Stone; Sheila, Karen Morley; Terrence Granville, Charles Starrett; Fah Lo See, Myrna Loy; Von Berg, Jean Hersholt; Sir Lionel Barton, Lawrence Grant; McLeod, David Torrence; Goy Lo Sung, E. Allyn Warren; Dr. Nicholson, Ferdinand Gottschalk; Lord Fairgyle, C. Montague Shaw; Knife Thrower, Steve Clemente; Coolie Spy, Edward Peil Sr.; Indian Prince, Lal Chand Mehra; Swordsman, Tetsu Komai; Slave, Everett Brown; Steward, Willie Fung; Potentate, Chris-Pin Martin; Guest, James B. Leong; Coolie, Allen Jung; Slave, Clinton Rosemond.

(Appearing in the deleted scenes directed by Charles Vidor were Gertrude Michael as Sheila and Herbert Bunston as Lord Fairgyle).

# On the Spot

# Jaguar Spots Light Up L.A.

#### by Mary Hardesty

The makers of television commercials understand that image is everything. It is therefore in the world of television production that some of today's most interesting and innovative cinematography can be found. The budgets and schedules are extravagant by most production standards, and all that time and attention is lavished on thirty seconds, often less.

With these facts in mind, American Cinematographer inaugurates a new department, dedicated to chronicling television commercial cinematography. What follows is the first installment.

After Jaguar made a number of changes to its 1995 XJ car series, the company turned to director/cinematographer Jeff Zwart to convey these updates to potential new buyers. Zwart is a former still photographer who began his career as a commercial director/cinematographer six years ago.

In keeping with the spots' tag line, "We kept what you love — the rest is history," stock footage of older Jaguar models appears on the sides of buildings and bridges. The footage is also reflected subtly in the body of the new 1995 model as it drives through the scenes.

To accomplish this, Zwart worked with the creative team at Ogilvy & Mather/New York to find old footage that would work well when projected onto different surfaces.

"Anything that had subtle movement was going to be lost," explains Zwart, who has been director/cinematographer on two other national Jaguar spots. Since the old footage came in different formats, it had to be transferred to 35mm and color-corrected prior to the shoot.

"We were also missing footage of some of the cars we wanted to highlight in the projection, so we had to augment our stock by shooting additional footage," he adds.

The next challenge was to find appropriate and usable locations to meet the creative as well as the technical requirements, since the images were going to be projected using both front- and rear-screen projection techniques. Buildings ranging from the Los Angeles Convention Center to an old brick warehouse were selected.

"I didn't just want it to look flat like a drive-in movie," explains Zwart. His favorite location was a large white-walled building with a line of palm trees in front. "It gave the shot contrast and created a great sense of depth because the projection showed up in the light areas but didn't show up in the trees."

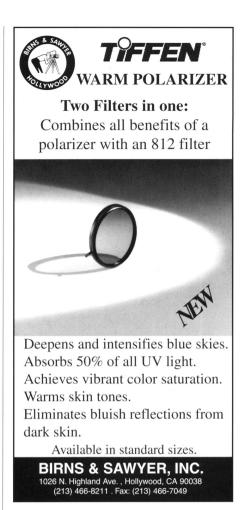
One of the most difficult locations turned out to be the old brick building. "We knew the fire escapes and windows would make the image difficult to read, so we had to select simple car-oriented images," says Zwart, who found that footage of people worked better when projected onto plain backgrounds.

To light these buildings, Zwart relied on just the light of the projected images. Lights were then shown on objects around the buildings to help augment the shots.

"Every time we had a projected image on a building, we also had the car driving through the shot, so we had to light the image in such a way that you could see the car at night without dulling the projected image on the building," says Zwart.

To accomplish this, Zwart used numerous lights on cranes, as well as lighting long flats that ran the length of the distance the car had to travel to get across the frame.

To complicate the situation further, the agency had given Zwart a black car to shoot. "During our one day of shooting close-up reflection shots in a studio, the black car was great, but silver would have been best for the location





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Phoenix, Arizona 85032 Ph (602) 224-6162 Fax (602) 493-2468 work," says Zwart, who spent two full nights on location and one additional day shooting the extra footage needed for projection.

"We were always in a rush those nights to be finished with our two to three setups by dawn," he recalls. "In some cases we had projectors on lifts 30 feet in the air across six-lane-wide streets, and the crew numbered as high as 30. It was quite a production," says Zwart, who also simultaneously shot footage for an eight-minute Jaguar dealer film.

"I learned that there is a very small zone in which the projected image and the car both read well. It always seemed to work the very best right at twilight," he says. He used Kodak 5297 film stock for virtually everything, and neutral grad filters to balance the shots.

Because of a fast turnaround schedule, Zwart didn't have time to test, so he had to cover himself with different exposure settings. "Through different metering and video playback we were able to establish a balance between what was right for the projected image and the moving car, but we shot around the f/2 range all the time," he recalls, noting that projected images become too dark to pick up in video assist monitors. "When I was looking through the camera lens, I could only see the real car," says Zwart, who used one Arriflex camera and Zeiss high-speed prime lenses.

"I like the filmic quality of this spot," he sums up. "So much of our work has evolved to where it's done in post, and the cinematographer has no control over it. This spot was great because we did everything in-camera."

Spot name: "Reflections"

Client: Jaguar

**Production company:** @radical.media **Director/cinematographer:** Jeff Zwart

**Executive producer:** Frank Scherman

Producer: Amy Hunter

Agency: Ogilvy & Mather, New York

Creative director/art director:

Sherry Pollack

Shot at Raleigh Studios, Hollywood, and on

location around Los Angeles.

#### compiled by Marji Rhea

#### **EXR Color Negative Film**

Eastman Kodak's newest EXR color negative film is a new medium-speed film designed to record more details, have a lower overall contrast, and to provide optimum performance in telecine transfer, as well as to intercut with other EXR camera films.

Eastman EXR color negative film 5287/7287 has an exposure index of 200 in 3200 Kelvin tungsten light, and 125 in daylight with a Kodak Wratten Number 85 filter on the camera lens. It is available in 65mm, 35mm, and 16mm formats. This is the sixth EXR camera film Kodak has developed since 1989. The company has also developed companion EXR color intermediate and print films.

The development of this product began several years ago, when Kodak asked focus groups of cinematographers around the world to describe their "dream film." During the past year, many cinematographers tested early versions of the new film; their suggestions were factored into the design of the EXR 5287/7287 film.

The flexible automation of the company's new plant, which relies on thousands of sensors monitoring every step of the process in microscopic detail, coating machinery that is vibration-free, and other features, have eliminated variables in the manufacturing process. The flexible robotic operation of the new plant enabled Kodak to design the EXR 5287/7287 with imaging characteristics which would previously have been considered impractical or impossible to manufacture.

#### **Digital Post Workstations**

Chyron Corporation will be distributing the Jaleo digital postproduction workstations, manufactured by Comunicacion Integral Consultores of Madrid

Jaleo Composite, a video and audio editing and compositing system, is designed as an open environment and edits and composites video and sound elements from videotape, disk recorders, 2-D and 3-D graphics systems, and 2-D and 3-D animated images.

The system's interface has simple color-coded bars and multiple video windows for real-time display. When video and sound source material are digitized, Jaleo creates multiple copies of the original resolution format. Real-time display is available in color-coded windows, and real-time transitions and effects may be performed. Multiple monitor windows may be active.

Time code is supported in Jaleo Composite, allowing users to operate Jaleo in offline or online mode. CMX, Sony, and Grass Valley Group EDL formats are supported.

Jaleo Composite's effects include dissolves, chroma keys, unlimited DVE effects with light source, shadows and page turns, keyers with additive, luminance and color parameters, and many image filters including image blur, posturize, and negative effects. All of these effects are software-based and have unlimited use in the production environment. Motion tracking and image stabilization options are also available as part of the Jaleo Composite system.

Jaleo Composite operates on the complete Silicon Graphics line of products. The first release, version 1.6, runs on the Indy R4400 and Indigo 2 platforms.

For information: Chyron Corporation, 5 Hub Drive, Melville, NY 11747, (516) 845-2000, FAX (516) 845-5210.

#### **Video Capture**

A new video capture solution from Precision Digital Images provides real-time imaging for Peripheral Component Interconnect (PCI) bus-based platforms. The PCI version of the IMAXX Medium Speed Monochrome (MM) performs high-speed, high-performance analog video capture.

The PCI bus standard removes the bottleneck in moving data between the CPU and peripherals and is proces-

sor-independent for compatibility on multiple platforms. With a fast clock speed and a wide data path, the PCI bus allows rapid throughput. Using PDI's PCI interface and bus mastering, the IMAXX can send data across the host bus at rates of up to 60MB/second.

The IMAXX MM includes DOS versions of PDI's Maxxima applications programming interface and MaxxGrab capture software. Maxxima provides an image acquisition software library for development of custom software for the IMAXX. MaxxGrab exercises calls available in the Maxxima API, giving the user full control over video parameters and capture functions.

A processor-independent addin card interface ensures efficient transition to future processor generations. The product's plug-and-play capability provides auto-configuration for ease of use. And compliance with industry standards, including linear burst support and sustained transfer rates at 33 MHz, simplifies integration. With PCI specifications, the IMAXX is designed to evolve with the PCI bus as it migrates to various platforms.

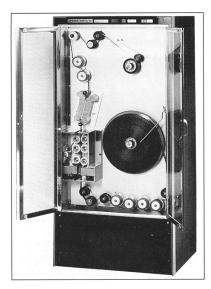
For information: Precision Digital Images, 6742 185th Ave. NE, Suite 100, Redmond, WA 98052, (206) 882-0218, FAX (206) 867-9177.

#### Film Cleaning Machine

Lipsner-Smith's Excel 900 non-immersion motion picture film cleaning machine uses particle transfer rollers and wetted rotary buffers to effectively remove contaminants from the film's surface. Two softnap buffers are wetted with a choice of tested, environmentally responsible solvents, including low-cost isopropanol (IPA). New DuPont HFC and 3M PFC solvents can also be used.

The unit features ergonomic design with straight line threading. Cleaning mechanisms electronically engage at the operator's command. Cleaning speed, buffer wetness and film tension are microprocessor-controlled. The

77



compact, free-standing unit takes up less than six square feet of floor space and operates at 115 volts.

The Excel 900 does not replace the full immersion CF3000-MK VI system recommended for camera original and other irreplaceable films. It is designed for use in film laboratories, film-to-tape transfer facilities and other applications where the more sophisticated solvent-based film cleaning method is not always necessary.

The CF3000-MK VI motion picture film cleaning machine, meanwhile, can now be used with alternate cleaning agents. The solvent traditionally used to clean film will be phased out of production by December 1995. The MKVI uses ultrasonic energy to effectively cavitate the cleaning solvent, providing the impingement scrubbing action needed to remove finger prints, dirt and oils from the film's surface. In addition, the MK VI features an optionally engaged fourroller submerged rotary buffer system to assist in removing impacted dirt. The MK VI cleans at speeds of up to 200 feet per minute. The machine recycles the solvent it uses. Vapors are condensed to liquid on chilled coils and returned to the system. Contaminated solvent is reclaimed by an internal distillation unit.

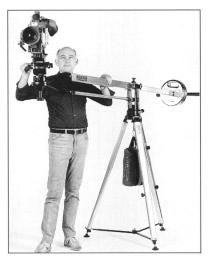
For information: Lipsner-Smith Company, 4700 Chase, Lincolnwood, IL 60646, (708) 677-3000, FAX (708) 677-1311.

#### Jib Arm

Cinekinetic's Microjib Pro SX tripod-mounted jib arm has a built-in spider connector enabling the operator to

attach the jib to any professional tripod without additional accessories. The unit weighs 25 pounds and supports a payload of 100 pounds, and offers a crane movement of five feet with a radius pan of 55 inches.

Clutch-controlled heavy-duty ball-bearing assemblies provide smooth pan and tongue moves and offer full lock and variable drag through all axes. A 150mm bowl and 150mm adaptor are available as options. Standard barbell weights or sand sacks are used to coun-



terbalance most cine and video cameras. Keyed heavy-duty handlebars enable the operator to drive the jib from the rear as well as the front. When mounted on a dolly, the Microjib Pro SX may be used as both a static or a dynamic mount.

Made from heat-tempered aluminum castings and custom-designed sculpted extrusions, the Microjib Pro folds to fit inside a 7" X 41" X 14" optional canvas traveling case.

For example: Cinekinetic, 2 Avon Court, Thornlie, Western Australia 6108, (619) 459-3690, FAX (619) 493-2168.

#### Fuji Film Stocks

Fuji Photo Film's new Fujicolor Super F-Series of color motion picture film includes Fujicolor F-125/F-250 tungsten type and F-64D/F-250D daylight type color negative film. Fujicolor Positive Film FCP is a new color print film that dispenses with the conventional need for a black backing. The new films feature outstanding sharpness and granularity with rich, realistic gradation. Expanded exposure latitude produces reliable performance under varied conditions, while

anti-scratch, anti-static and camera behavior properties are enhanced by black resin backing on the film base. These films also offer excellent compatibility with intermediate film for special effects work. Super F-Series films feature an extended storage life, and processed films can be preserved for up to a century.

For information: Fuji Photo Film USA, Inc., 555 Taxter Road, Elmsford, NY 10523.

#### **Modular Scrims**

Scrim Jim, a modular diffusion and reflector panel system, is made of anodized aircraft aluminum and consists of tubing in two different lengths to create four different sized diffusers, 42" X 42", 42" X 72", 72" X 72" and 98" X 98".

Fabrics of various types are affixed to the frame by means of Velcro. Fabrics types offered are white net, black net, ¾-stop, full stop, 1¼-stop diffusers; golden silver/white, silver/white, and gold/white reflectors; and a subtractive black block. The metallic fabrics feature a matte finish like other Westcott reflectors.

The system is available in small, medium and large kits, each consisting of one frame and one each of ¾-stop, 1¼-stop or silver/white fabrics. Various accessories are available with Scrim Jim, including a clamp, handle, pivotal floor stand and a butterfly bracket.

For information: The F.J. Westcott Co., P.O. Box 1596, Toledo, OH 43603, (419) 243-7311.

#### **Digital Film Scanners**

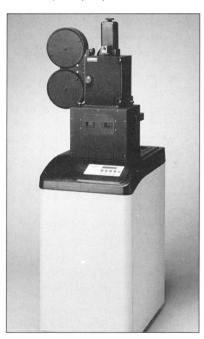
Imagica's Digital Film Scanner IDS 3000 is designed to transfer 35mm motion picture film into 4K X 3K, 36 bits per pixel, digital image data. It employs tri-color line CCD for pick-up and a proprietary movement capable of fast film shuttling with precise film registration. Magnification and scanning position are optically variable with computer control to extract the maximum resolution out of the various 35mm film formats.

The tri-color line CCD reads 12 million pixels from one frame of motion picture film. To meet the tolerance required at this resolution, the newly designed high-precision pin-registered movement locks the film frame in place during the scan.

The combination of proprietary dichroic filter and the tri-color line CCD provides significantly reduced cross-talk between red, green and blue colors and flawless color reproduction. The primary color correction adjusts the level for each of the red, green and blue exposures, yielding the best light source to achieve the fully extended dynamic range and best signal-to-noise ratio.

Also new from the company is the Digital Film Scanner IDS4000, which transfers 35mm motion picture film of various formats, including 35mm 8-perf (VistaVision), into digital image data. The tri-color line CCD used in the IDS4000 has high resolution and high-speed scanning features as well as a wide dynamic range and high signal-to-noise ratio. The entire system is software-controlled by a single SGI Iris workstation. Data transfer and system control can be handled by other workstations through the VME interface.

For information: Imagica Corporation of America, 5301 Beethoven St., Suite 199, Los Angeles, CA 90066, (310) 306-4180, FAX (310) 306-2334.

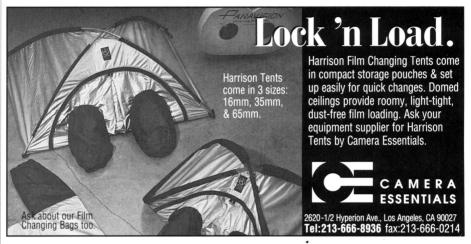


#### Film Recorder

Management Graphics' Solitaire Cine III Image Recorder is the latest in the company's line of film recorders for postproduction, special effects, and animation.

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computer-generated cine images. The recorder images as fast as 18 seconds per frame at 2K or 4K resolution. The Cine III can be configured with SGI workstations and other UNIX machines, PCs and Macs. Like the Cine II, the Cine III uses transfer rates of 3 MB per second for SCSI interfaces and 600KB per second for GPIB interfaces. An optional buffer board provides up to 256 MB of optional RAM so users can shoot large files quickly. The Cine III also features a removable memory card that can be used to add new firmware or LUTs quickly and easily.

The Cine III currently supports 35mm Cine/Academy, 35mm VistaVision and 4X5 Custom Premium camera modules. Additional support for 35mm slide, 65mm 5-perf, 65mm 4/8-perf and 65mm Imax camera modules is in development.

The Cine III is supported by the RFX Bitmap Driver and other third-party software drivers. Built-in application support is provided by Softlmage, Wavefront and Alias applications running on SGI.

For information: Management Graphics, Inc., 1401 E. 79th St., Minneapolis, MN 55425, (612) 854-1220, FAX (612) 851-6159.

#### Scene Logger

Scene Stealer, an automatic scene detector and video logger from Dubner International, now supports a game port interface for controlling audio playback. By adding a foot switch, operators can replay audio sequences for transcription.

The game port interface is part of the Scene Stealer for Windows program. Under Windows, the onscreen text box used for adding notes to the video images is essentially unlimited. It can be scaled and positioned anywhere on the screen. With the addition of a foot pedal to start, stop and replay audio, the user can record sequences quickly and efficiently.

For information: Dubner International, 13 Westervelt Place, Westwood, NJ 07675, (201) 664-6434, FAX (201) 358-9377.

#### **Nonlinear Editing System**

Editing Machines Corp.'s TruEdit software-only nonlinear editing system is based on the Primetime OnLine Editor and runs on the Targa 2000 card from RasterOps/Truevision. The system

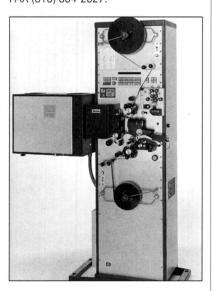
offers BetaCam level picture quality in PAL and NTSC with 50/60 fields/second performance. Two channels of CD-quality 44.1K audio are fully editable with slider control of levels

For information: Dynatech, (800) 637-6488.

#### **Neutral Density Filters**

Pancro Mirrors' Razor-Sharp ND and ND Stripe Grad was developed for overexposure control. Like Pancro's standard Hard and Soft Grad, the new ND is half neutral density (.30, .60, .90, or 1.2) and half clear. However, the Razor Sharp ND has no graduation. The ND Strip Grad consists of a one-inch netural density stripe placed in the center of a filter that is clear at both the top and bottom. The ND Stripe Grad is available in .30, .60, .90, 1.2, and 1.5 densities in any size graduation specified at the top and bottom of the stripe.

For information: Pancro Mirrors, Inc., 12734 Branford St., Unit 7, Arleta, CA 91331-4230, (818) 834-2926. FAX (818) 834-2027.



#### **Studio Projectors**

Kinotone Division of Arriflex has introduced two new studio projectors - FP-30EC for 35mm film, and FP-38FC for 16mm and 35mm films.

Both projectors are suitable for all aspects of studio application, such as dailies, mixing, postproduction and video scanning. The projectors feature direct electronic sprocket drive, constant film tension by microprocessor control, film shuttle speeds up to 300fps (35mm), and master/slave operation. They can also be

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remote-controlled by computer.

For information: Kinotone Division of Arriflex Corporation, 617 Route 303, Blauvelt, NY 10913-1123, (914) 353-1400, FAX (914) 425-1250.

#### VideoCube Software

ImMix has begun customer shipments of its Media File Exchange software for the VideoCube digital video postproduction workstation. MFE software converts VideoCube video and audio files into standard Macintoshformat files, allowing users to transfer VideoCube media files through the Macintosh. It provides for file transfer among VideoCube workstations and open use of Macintosh-compatible file servers and archiving devices. MFE users can select any level of Macintosh networking solution, based on their requirements for network speed, size and cost.

From within the VideCube application, MFE users can transfer footage files between a system's Media Processor and any local or networked Macintosh volume. Footage from TrackSheets and ClipSheets can be transferred in a single operaton. Applications for MFE include project collaborations among graphics, audio and VideoCube workstations: file transfers between VideoCube suites at multi-room facilities; and backing up media files via devices attached to the local Macintosh or via high-speed networks. Networking technologies that can be used in conjunction with MFE include Ethernet, AppleTalk and Sonic Solutions MediaNet.

The company has also begun shipping its new component video I/O board for the VideoCube. The new board offers direct input and output connectors for analog component (R-Y, B-Y, Y) video signals, as well as the S-video (Y/C) and analog composite connectors and reference input supplied with the standard I/O board. The component I/O board is available as an option for new VideoCube systems, and as a field upgrade for existing systems.

For information: ImMix, P.O. Box 2980, Grass Valley, CA 95945, (916) 272-9800, FAX (916) 272-9801.

### Points East

## Behind the Counter and the Camera: Manhattan Video Center's Owner Produces Feature Film

#### by Brooke Comer

Bahman Maghsoudlou's new production company, the International Film and Video Center, epitomizes the tenacity and ingenuity of independent filmmaking in New York. International Film and Video originated and still exists at Maghsoudlou's video store, which specializes in selling and renting foreign films, art/historical classics, documentaries and other rare titles as well as mainstream films. Maghsoudlou, an Iranian expatriate and scholar whose books include Iranian Cinema and Subjective Cinema in Alfred Hitchcock's Films, opened the Center 11 years ago. Today, with over 14.000 titles and a clientele around the world, Maghsoudlou has branched into film production. His first project, Manhattan By Numbers, directed by fellow Iranian Amir Naderi, and shot by firsttime feature director of photography John Callanan, has already won critical acclaim.

"It is always difficult to make a film," Maghsoudlou observes, "but especially on location in a major city. Especially if that city is New York in winter." Manhattan By Numbers follows George Murphy (John Wojda), a recently laid-off newspaper man who will lose his small Washington Heights apartment at the end of the day if he doesn't come up with \$12,000 in back rent. His wife and daughter have moved out. He has already borrowed from his friends and family. He seeks a last resort in another unemployed journalist, Tom Ryan, but his hopes dim when it turns out Ryan has mysteriously disappeared. In a last-ditch, all-day effort, Murphy takes to the streets, moving diagonally from Washington Heights to the Lower East Side, in search of someone who will help him.

Maghsoudlou knew Naderi's work from their native Iran, where the director had made 11 films, seven of which went to international festivals.

Both *The Runner* and *Water, Wind, Sand* (the latter was shown at MoMA's New Directors New Films series in 1990) reflect the director's concern with man's struggle to survive overwhelming poverty. *Manhattan By Numbers,* recently released in New York, is Naderi's first English-language feature.

Manhattan By Numbers came in on budget for half a million dollars, encouraging Maghsoudlou to produce more art films of similar budget and quality at the rate of one or two per year. "I want to select a good story, work with a good director, and keep the budget down," he explains. His own titles will fit right in with his video stock. "The video business is down overall," he explains, "but we're surviving so well because we specialize and provide a service." While chain video rental stores may carry 10,000 tapes and offer 2.000 titles. International Film and Video Center has more than 14,000 tapes and 13,000 titles.

Original-format prints are also available at International Film and Video Center. While restoration of original masters is expensive and time-consuming, it is proving to be worthwhile considering the demand from buyers and renters. Restored videocassettes such as The Wild Bunch, The Man Who Fell to Earth, Napoleon and A Star is Born are appreciated by Maghsoudlou's discerning clientele. "More and more people, from film students to film lovers to historians, are asking for uncut original-format films, even if the version they want hasn't been available in years." Studios may have to spend more to get the product back out and restore it to its full glory, "but they're finding out it's worthwhile," he says, "because while yesterday's audience didn't know the difference between an uncut original and the videocassette of the same name, today's audience is much more sophisticated."

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When Mr. Skeffington, starring Bette Davis, was made in 1944, 20 minutes were cut from the 147-minute film one week after its release and never seen again. That is, until virgin master nitrate was found and the home video gave viewers their first chance to see the uncut film. "Classic films that come out on video in shortened form aren't valid as art," says Maghsoudlou, who always lets his customers know when they're buying an "abridged" film. Restored titles make up some 10% of his titles, and he always encourages customers to get complete or original versions whenever possible.

Maghsoudlou gets many calls from actors, directors and cinematographers. "Often a director will want his actors to watch a legendary performance, or for a cinematographer to take note of certain camera moves or use of light." Maghsoudlou can offer them the Russian version of War and Peace, all eight films made by French director Max Ophuls, or the entire collections of Luis Buñuel and Pier Paolo Pasolini. "We can locate anything in half an hour, if it's available," says Maghsoudlou. If it isn't, he'll do everything he can to make it available, including the transfer of a customer's 16-millimeter print of the 1924 film Salome to a three-quarter-inch cassette.

A small number of foreign films are not subtitled or dubbed in English. But Maghsoudlou's dedication to "educating and exposing the public to international cinema" is not deterred by the simple matter of language. Beginning in 1994, customers at International Film and Video center will be able to rent more than a movie; they can "rent" a person to translate a foreign language film if it isn't available in English.

Maghsoudlou plans to produce four more films by foreign filmmakers in New York, including Shokof's upcoming project *Breathful*, about the misadventures of two artists in New York City. "New York is not just a backdrop," the producer muses. "It is as tangible as an actor. It touches you. It has charisma. There is no other city in the world like it." He credits New York's extraordinary qualities to the wealth of ethnic groups that fuel multiculturalism. "I want to make more films that bring a foreign perspective to New York," he explains.

## Books in Review

#### by George Turner

#### The Cine Goes to Town

by Richard Abel University of California Press. cloth, 190 pps.

The French film industry was born in 1896, and in just a few years it grew rapidly into a giant. For almost two decades. France led the world in the production and distribution of motion pictures. Pathé-Freres became the largest of all film companies and Paris became the heart of the cinema. In The Cine Goes to Town, Richard Abel, a National Endowment for the Arts Professor of English at Drake University, brings this rich but poorly remembered and largely misunderstood period into sharp focus.

The first eight years were devoted to "the cinema of attractions," in which brief scenic views paved the way to the delirious trick comedies of Méliès and his imitators. These were the Star Wars showpieces of their day. By 1901 French exhibitors were offering programs that consisted of a potpourri of short subjects — trick films, actuality scenes. dances, comical turns, historical tableaux, Biblical scenes, etc. Brief story films soon followed, and eventually features and even serials. The French producers were far ahead of the Americans in the development of multi-reel story films (which actually originated in Australia). Artistically, the early French films were superior to those from most other countries, but the imports from America — especially the Tom Mix Westerns and the melodramas from Vitagraph and Biograph — became increasingly popular in France.

France had already lost its top place in the film industry to the United States before the summer of 1914, when the advent of World War I brought production in France to a halt. Until then, the French cinema had still been in an extremely healthy state. By the time production resumed, the dominance of the American movies could no longer be challenged, but the French film has continued to this day to exert its influence on the cinema.

This is an important book which offers fresh insights into an exciting and adventurous period of filmmaking. It's loaded with surprises — for example, the revelation that Pathé had produced an excellent 35-minute version of Hugo's Notre Dame de Paris — with Henry Krauss portraving Quasimodo a dozen years before Lon Chaney took on the role.

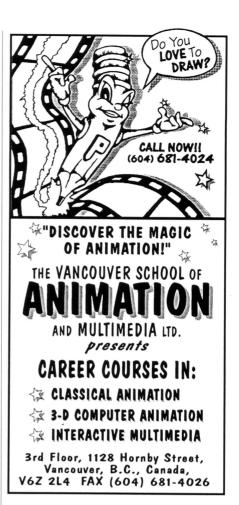
#### **Reinventing Reality**

by Mark Spergel Scarecrow, cloth, 336 pps., \$42.50

Number 37 in Scarecrow's Filmmaker's Series is devoted to the gifted and innovative Rouben Mamoulian. Mark Spergel, director of evening and graduate services at Baruch College. shows great admiration for his subject without ignoring the faults that eventually destroyed his career.

Mamoulian made numerous contributions to the theater over a 44year period, during which he staged operas and directed many important plays, including the original Broadway presentations of Porgy in 1927, R.U.R. in 1930, Porgy and Bess (the operatic version by Gershwin) in 1935, Oklahoma! in 1943, and Carousel in 1945. He directed only 16 movies, but his impact upon the art of filmmaking is enormous.

Had he made but one picture — his first, Applause — he would have a secure place in film history. Made at the Paramount Astoria Studios in 1928, this innovative early talkie broke the taboo the new medium of sound had imposed upon camera mobility and deftly combined picture and dialogue more expertly than had seemed possible. Its influence on future production techniques is incalculable. In 1931, Mamoulian's City Streets and Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde provided further innovations in cinematography and sound recording, and in



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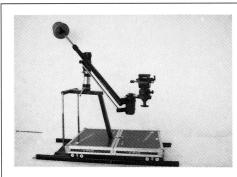
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1935 he made the first three-color Technicolor feature, Becky Sharp. There were other hits as well, but in the mid-1940s his career took a plunge from which it never recovered. The author manages to make explicable both Mamoulian's genius and the reasons for his decline at a point when he should have been at the height of his powers.

#### George Cukor, **Master of Elegance**

by Emanuel Levy Morrow, hardcover, 464 pps., \$25

George Cukor was burdened with his designation as "a woman's director" and the endless speculations as to why he was fired from Gone With the Wind and whether he was homosexual — all of which is unfair, considering that he made 50 major features between 1930 and 1981. Among these were some solid hits: A Bill of Divorcement, Dinner at Eight, David Copperfield, Little Women, Camille, Holiday, The Women, The Philadelphia Story, A Woman's Face, Gaslight, A Double Life, Adam's Rib, Born Yesterday, A Star is Born. Six received Academy Award nominations for Best Picture, five were nominated for Best Director Oscars, and one, the enchanting My Fair Lady, won in both categories.

In this well-researched work, Emanuel Levy, professor of film and sociology at Arizona State, also records some embarrassments: Tarnished Ladv. Sylvia Scarlett, Romeo and Juliet, Two-Faced Woman, A Life of Her Own, etc. While he did have a knack for directing actresses, Cukor also elicited fine performances from a lot of male performers, including Ronald Colman, Rex Harrison, Spencer Tracy, James Mason, William Holden and John Barrymore.

Cukor's great disappointment was being fired by Selznick from Gone With the Wind after two years of preparation and several weeks of production. Included in the wealth of information in this book is the answer to a question some of us had wondered about: are any of Cukor's scenes in the final cut of GWTW? Two memorable sequences are his: Scarlett nursing Melanie through her difficult childbirth (including the scenes with Prissy), and Scarlett shooting a marauding Yankee soldier at Tara. \*

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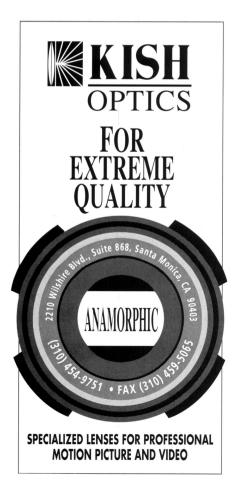
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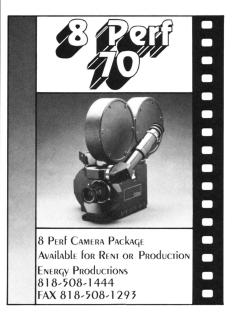
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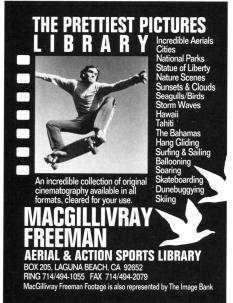
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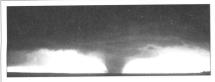
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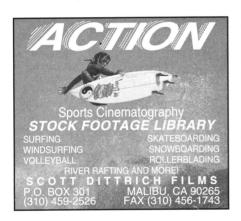
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THE SCHOOL OF FILM & VIDEO invites applications for full-time and part-time appointments in the areas of Screenwriting, Video Editing, Computer Graphics, Character Animation Story Development and Full Animation for the Academic Year 1995/ 96. Applicants should have professional experience and/or demonstrated ability in teaching, preferably at the college level. Persons interested in these positions should submit a letter of application indicating areas of experience and current resume to: Hartmut Bitomsky, Dean School of Film/ Video, California Institute of the Arts, 24700 McBean Parkway, Santa Clarita, CA 91355. Closing date for receipt of applications is January 30. 1995. CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF THE ARTS is an Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action Employer. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

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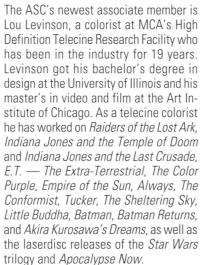
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#### From the Clubhouse



कर कर कर

Dean Cundey, ASC was one of the participants at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences' October 6th "Lecture in the Lobby," a discussion which focused on the films of Steven Spielberg and Robert Zemeckis, on which all of the participants had collaborated.

Cundey, who was nominated for an Academy Award in 1988 for his work on Who Framed Roger Rabbit?, joined production designer Rick Carter, whose credits include Forrest Gump, Jurassic Park, Back to the Future II and III, Death Becomes Her, and Empire of the Sun; David Koepp, screenwriter on Jurassic Park, Death Becomes Her, The Paper, and The Shadow, and Academy Award-winning special effects designer Michael Lantieri, who has worked on Jurassic Park, Back to the Future II, Death Becomes Her, Hook, and Roger Rabbit.

कर कर कर

Haskell Wexler, ASC, Gu Changwei and Carlo Varini, AFC were recently asked to participate in testing the new Eastman EXR color negative film 5287/7287. The trio's results were made into a short documentary called *Three Points of View*, which records how each achieved their individual looks in their ex-

periments with the film. Filmmaker Charles Vanderpool documented each of the three cinematographers lighting and shooting their tests, and then interviewed each about their impressions of the film and their perceptions about filmmaking in general.

कर कर कर

Gordon Willis, ASC will be receiving the ASC's 1995 Lifetime Achievement Award at the Awards dinner on February 26th at the Beverly Hilton Hotel. Many of Willis's features are already considered classics, including Klute, The Godfather, The Godfather Part II, The Paper Chase, The Parallax View, All the President's Men, Annie Hall and Manhattan. He has shot 35 films to date. many of them far from the mainstream in content. He is known for his dramatic lighting on The Godfather, for choosing the heretofore-outdoor anamorphic format for The Paper Chase, for resurrecting black & white in Manhattan, and for filming one of the most successful sequels in film history, The Godfather II. He has worked with Woody Allen on many of the director's films, including Zelig, Annie Hall, Manhattan, A Midsummer Night's Sex Comedy, Stardust Memories, and Broadway Danny Rose.

Willis, whose first credit as cinematographer was 1969's *End of the Road* with Stacy Keach and James Earl Jones, became a member of the ASC in 1975 and earned his first Academy Award nomination in 1982 for *Zelig*. His next nomination was for *The Godfather Part III* in 1990, for which he also earned an ASC Award nomination.

The son of a makeup man at Warner Bros. in New York, Willis started his career as a summer stock actor, but switched to lighting and still photography, and during the Korean War spent four years in the Air Force motion picture unit filming instructional films.

ĀC will be covering Willis' award and career in our February issue. ₹

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# The Last Page

# Protecting Film's Heritage

The Library of Congress has added another 25 films to its National Film Registry List, bringing to 150 the number of pictures that have been recognized for their historical, cultural and aesthetic significance. Since 1988, the Library has collected and preserved archival copies of the registry films in their initial release form.

The nominations are screened by the National Film Preservation Board, which

includes academics and representatives from the Screen Actors Guild, the Directors Guild of America, the National Society of Film Critics, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and the MPAA. Librarian of Congress James Billington makes the final selection.

The films and their cinematographers are:

The African Queen, 1951, Jack Cardiff, BSC The Apartment, 1960, Joseph LaShelle, ASC The Cool World, 1963, Baird Bryant A Corner in Wheat, 1909, Billy Bitzer E.T. — The Extra-Terrestrial, 1982, Allen Daviau, ASC The Exploits of Elaine, 1914, Joseph Dubray Force of Evil, 1948, George Barnes, ASC Freaks, 1932, Merritt B. Gerstad, ASC Hell's Hinges, 1916, Joseph August, ASC Hospital, 1970, documentary by Frederick Wiseman Invasion of the Body Snatchers, 1956, Ellsworth Fredricks, ASC The Lady Eve, 1941, Victor Milner, ASC Louisiana Story, 1948, Richard Leacock The Manchurian Candidate, 1962, Lionel Lindon, ASC Marty, 1955, Joseph LaShelle, ASC Meet Me in St. Louis, 1944, George Folsey, ASC Midnight Cowboy, 1969, Adam Holender, ASC A Movie, 1958, Bruce Conner Pinocchio, 1940, animated Safety Last, 1923, Walter Lundin, ASC Scarface, 1932, Lee Garmes, ASC and L. William O'Connell Snow White, 1933, animated Tabu, 1931, Floyd Crosby, ASC Taxi Driver, 1976, Michael Chapman Zapruder Film (footage of Kennedy assassination), 1963, Abraham Zapruder

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